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Music and Lyrics

by [Firenation](#)

Summary

Since Derek Hale's pop band went bust (he doesn't like to talk about it) and his career went with it, he's been struggling to get a break doing what he loves best. Stiles Stilinski might just be able to help him out.

Or the Music and Lyrics AU that no one asked for. Prepare yourself for fluff inducing cavities.

Notes

See the end of the work for [notes](#)

The Meet

Derek's in trouble.

It's not just that the pitch that the presenters are trying to sell to him is goddamn *awful* (actually an insult to the word awful), just because he works out doesn't mean that he *likes* to hurt people, unless they start it first. That's not even the worst part. The worst part is that this is what his life has come to.

Sitting in a room with Isaac and a bunch of middle aged producers who *pity* him enough to consider him a has been, and a has been that could potentially work in the barely legal television show, *Battle of the Eighties Has Beens*.

Feels great.

Derek would like to point out, for the record, that when *Pop* became wildly successful, it was the late nineties. He's been living off that success ever since.

"No," Derek says shortly, interrupting some greying, obsequious producer. "I'm not *hitting* anyone, not for anything. No."

His voice is louder than intended, and he winces.

"I'll be in the car," he says to Isaac.

With that, he leaves, a little embarrassed at the dramatic exit.

He does steal a muffin.

Or three.

The ride back to his apartment is quiet; Derek almost worries he'd made a

mistake back there, or insulted Isaac in some way, but Isaac had apologised as soon as he got into the Camaro. And stole one of Derek's muffins. Men have been killed for less.

"My mistake," Isaac says again, through a mouthful of chocolate chip muffin, once they're in the lobby of Derek's apartment building. Derek rolls his eyes fondly. Isaac's been Derek's manager for almost thirteen years, this isn't the first mistake he's made; Derek likes to think that there have been more successes than mistakes, though.

"I know." Derek says. He nods at Deaton, the surly building manager, as they pass. Deaton doesn't even acknowledge them.

This is nothing new.

Derek goes straight for the Poptarts when they walk into Derek's apartment. He stress-eats, it's a thing of his.

"So I was wrong about today, I'll give you that, *but*," Isaac admits, beaming in a way that makes Derek worried. Isaac's plans have a tendency to never work, emphasis on the never. For instance, the time when Derek had to perform at a fat farm, and was ripped from the stage by a group of hungry slightly overweight women. They stole his leather jacket and sold it on Ebay.

"But I've done *good*; I've gone and got you a meeting with *Erica*." He says her name with some reverence.

"With who?" Derek asks through a mouthful of strawberry Poptart, honestly baffled. He settles in at his grand piano, his precious (he will never not feel like Gollum when he thinks that). His fingers are itching to play the slick ivory keys of the piano in front of him.

People ask him sometimes how he got to be so good at piano, and the truth of the matter is, he's not sure. He just knew that he played whenever he couldn't express himself with words, and being the irritated, annoyingly shy person that he is, this was more often than not, especially after the accident

that killed his entire family in one fatal swoop, and after what Kate did to him.

He's always just played. Stolen moments in music stores, school pianos, until he could afford the piano in front of him, once his career with Jackson Whittemore and Christopher Argent paid off. It supported him when no one else really could, once Jackson took five of his songs, and became successful with them *alone*, and after Kate...he'd never heard from Chris again, not that he'd really want to hear from any of them. He'd rather forget all of it. Every last detail.

But he makes his living from songs that he wrote about Kate, so it's more difficult to forget than he'd like, even though there are no lingering feelings whatsoever.

"Pick up a copy of *Rolling Stone*, would you," Isaac says, exasperated. "She's bigger and better than Nicki and Mariah put together."

"So this is good," Derek says, even though his heart sinks at the thought of working with a practically teenage girl that will arrive fifteen minutes late with Starbucks.

"Yes," Isaac says, as he kicks up his feet on Derek's expensive coffee table. Derek rolls his eyes. Especially when, after half an hour of companionable silence, only broken by the swishing of paper as Derek flicked through his song book, and Isaac reading the newspaper under his ass, the buzzer rings.

He huffs out a sigh and goes to get it. If it's another 'fan' or pseudo psychopath demanding his autograph, he's going to get his BB gun. Not that he owns one. He will find one and use it, dammit.

"Yeah?" He says into the mouthpiece.

"You've got a person in to do your plants," Deaton says, bored. Derek rolls his eyes.

"Is it Greenburg?" Derek asks.

“Fascinating stuff, Greenburg fell into a patch of poison oak, so a friend named Stiles is covering him. Apparently he’ll be in and out in five minutes. He may prostitute in his spare time.” Derek can hear sputtering in the background. “No, wait, he assures me he doesn’t. My apologies.”

“Just send him up,” Derek grunts and backs away from the door.

Isaac shrugs at Derek when Derek frowns at him.

He’s just dying to get back to the piano, and this is a weird day, as they go.

It gets even weirder when he opens the door, and a gangly, freckled pale *blur* of a man just bursts through. Derek isn’t endeared to him in the slightest, largely because he shoves his stuff on the top of the piano.

Then he turns to face Derek, and all words die in his chest, and he just *stares*. He doesn’t usually date- has resolved himself to a lonely life consisting of his right hand, largely because once people look past the pop star façade, they don’t like what’s underneath, and two, he’s not great at the whole trusting thing. There’s a reason why his only friend is his manager. Who he pays. Sort of.

But the first thought that hits him is that Stiles is actually beautiful. And that’s a thought that hasn’t hit him for years, not since he went stupid over Kate. His eyes are doe-like, big and beautiful, shining, some beautiful shade between amber and hazel, set in a slim, memorable face, all big eyes and pouty lips, with a sharply (cute is the word his stupid brain supplies him with) upturned nose.

Isaac’s the first one to say anything.

“Hi, sorry, I’m his Carer, thanks for coming,” he says cheerfully, and he shakes his hand.

Stiles smothers a laugh when Derek makes a disapproving sound.

“No problem. So, Greenburg. Tragedy, really, the jackass.” Stiles shoots back. His voice is surprisingly reedy, and doesn’t match his broad

shoulders, the lightly muscled forearms, clearly visible in his white, v-neck short sleeved t-shirt, and Derek has gone past the line of pervert.

“You’re Stiles?” Derek tries to make it sound like a question. Stiles raises an eyebrow, probably trying to determine whether that was actually an insult. Dammit, it’s Derek’s tone, Isaac is always bitching at him about it. Isaac may be right. For once.

“Stiles Stilinski,” he agrees, and smiles carefully at Derek. “And you are?”

“You don’t know my name and you came into my house?” Derek snorts with laughter. “Are you asking to be killed?”

“Depends on who’s asking,” Stiles replies. “I carry a Mace with me, so I don’t think so.”

Isaac nods.

“Plants?” Isaac reminds them, when Derek starts staring again, at Stiles’ weird, little pixie face, and Stiles just glares back.

“I’m Derek Hale,” Derek supplies him with, and Stiles frowns, like the name’s vaguely familiar, and the way his eyes flick to the posters behind his head, Derek knows that Stiles now knows about his music career. To his credit, his expression doesn’t change.

“Good for you. Where’s your plant stuff?” Stiles asks. Derek is caught between being glad that Isaac suggested that owning plants is supposed to be good for calming oneself, because it brought Stiles here, and being angry that Isaac suggested the plant thing, because it brought Stiles here.

“Kitchen,” Derek says shortly. Stiles gives him the stink eye.

“Anyway,” Isaac says carefully, clicking at Derek to get his attention away from Stiles cluttering around in his kitchen. Derek’s scowling. “You were talking about the meeting.”

“Do you think it’s a good idea? What are the pros and cons,” Derek asks,

acutely aware of Stiles out of the corner of his eye. There's something about the jackass that grates on Derek's every nerve, in a good way, he thinks. But he's not sure.

There's a sudden exclamation of, 'Ow!', surprisingly low pitched, and Derek grits his jaw and turns to Stiles. He's clutching a finger, and staring fearfully at the bead of blood that appears at the tip. He gives a resentful look to the cactus in front of him.

"Do you have a first aid kit?" Stiles asks urgently, like he's just cut his hand open. Pathetic. He's deeply pathetic. Derek rolls his eyes.

"I've lent out my iron lung," Derek says pleasantly, smiling in a way that's supposed to antagonise. It does. Stiles scowls at Derek, frowning like a petulant child.

"Then I guess I should get home," Stiles says shortly. "Before the needle burrows into my skin and all the white glue and duct tape in the world can't get it out."

Derek stares at him, mystified, and Stiles just *huffs* and stalks out.

He forgets his jacket, which ruins his dramatic exit because he has to walk back in for it, but slams the door behind him to make up for it.

"Don't give him a key," Isaac says. "I like him, though."

"Yes," Derek agrees vaguely, still staring after Stiles.

Derek's put off his game for his meeting with Erica by Stiles goddamn Stilinski.

That's his entire name, when he surreptitiously asks Deaton before the meeting; and he's not even sure if Deaton's telling the truth, because that doesn't even sound like a name.

So he's a little jittery and still annoyed when he walks into the meeting. Isaac's glaring at him.

Derek watches Erica finish up a music video, and Derek feels immediately old. She doesn't look much older than twenty, at most, but she reminds him of himself, when he first started, when he was sixteen; there's an innocence about her, under the tough exterior. She's all blonde curls and blood-red lipstick as she smirks into the camera, and Derek thinks that he's going to hate her immediately. Or she's going to hate him immediately, if she's as vapid as she looks.

But when he walks into her dressing room, she's in sweats, still wearing make-up but hair pulled out of the way, sitting on the edge of a plush sofa, watching an episode of *Game of Thrones*. She shushes at Isaac when he opens his mouth to talk. Boyd, her bodyguard, brushes past them on his way into the room, and gestures at them to sit down and watch the show.

"I haven't seen this yet," Erica says urgently, not even tearing her eyes from the screen. "So just sit down and we'll talk after, okay?"

"Is Joffrey dead yet?" Derek mutters, because, sue him, Joffrey is a little *shit* with a face like menstrual cramps.

Erica beams at him, and Boyd claps a hand on his shoulder. Isaac sighs long-sufferingly but doesn't say anything. And when Erica produces a bag of strawberry popcorn, Derek realises that they're going to get on splendidly.

The job, as it turns out, is writing a song with the hook, 'A Way Back Into Love'. Before Friday. It's Tuesday. Three Days. He only has *three days*.

Derek finds this out while they share Chinese takeout in Erica's dressing room; Boyd eats as much as Derek, which rarely happens. For a millionaire, pop mega star, she's extremely down to earth.

“I’ve always loved *Pop*,” Erica informs him excitedly. She produces a pink notepad. “Sign this. Please.”

Derek’s pleased smile spreads across his face before he can stop it.

The thing is, while Derek loves to play the piano, writing and he do not go hand in hand. Derek finds it difficult to say things, let alone write them, and even staring at a blank piece of paper, expectantly waiting to be filled, actually turns his stomach.

So Isaac finds him a lyricist, and he’s supposed to be good, though the name Matt Daehler means nothing to Derek.

The guy’s a little crazy looking.

It may have something to do with his weirdly clear, pale blue eyes, or his reptilian smile, but something about him just scares the bejesus out of Derek. However, he mans up, because this is a job, and screw it, he doesn’t want to let Erica down; though she has a few other artists working on the song, Derek knows that this opportunity- writing a duet, then performing it with Erica in her sold-out Madison Square Garden concert- will put him back on the map, and he can’t afford to fail her.

“A way back into love,” Derek repeats, through gritted teeth. Matt likes brainstorming out loud, apparently, and has had Derek repeating the hook for a few minutes.

A knock at the door interrupts Matt’s brainstorming, and Derek practically throws himself off the piano bench to get it. He’s hoping for Isaac, Deaton, hell, even a psychopathic fan.

It’s Stiles.

Derek scowls. He’d tried to force the idiot’s face to the back of his head, but nope, Stiles has been the star of a number of Derek’s increasingly erotic dreams the past couple of nights.

Stiles doesn't look too pleased to see him either, jaw clenched tight with something akin to determination, Derek thinks.

"Hey," Stiles says shortly. "Back to do the plants, as promised."

"Still alive," Derek notes, shutting the door behind him. Stiles dumps his coat on the piano again, and Derek grits his teeth, taking in the plaid shirt that isn't tight enough. Ahem.

"Nothing a heck of glue couldn't handle," Stiles affirms. "I'll get the stuff and stay out of your hair."

"Stiles...you don't have to," Derek grits out. "Stay out of my way, I mean."

"Trust me, I do. You don't want to go to prison for murder, remember," Stiles snarks, and shoves past Derek to the kitchen.

Matt looks wistfully at Stiles when he walks away, staring at his slim hips.

Derek raises an eyebrow.

"He's coming back, right?" Matt asks hopefully.

"Unless he jumps out the window, yeah," Derek says shortly. He repeats the hook.

Stiles stalks back in the living room and goes straight for his arch-nemesis; the cactus.

"I want to find another person that will fit me like a glove," Matt supplies, unhelpfully. Derek stares, horrified. He's not sure if it was intended, but that sounded like a *Silence of the Lambs* reference, which. No. Hell to the no. Stiles' horrified glance reveals that he's clearly thinking the same thing.

"Try it with a D below middle C," Matt says, eyes far away in the distance, like he's imagining getting back onto the mothership and staying there, which Derek hopes he does.

Derek plays the note, and Matt sings along, tunelessly. No. Just no.

“*All I want to do is find a way back into lo-ove,*” Stiles sings, under his breath, probably not intentionally for Derek to hear, but he does. His head swings to Stiles.

“What was that?” He barks, and Stiles starts, tipping an obscene amount of water into a ficus.

Matt makes an irritated sound. “It doesn’t matter. Say the hook again.”

“It does, actually,” Derek says coolly. Later on, he’s going to be so proud of himself for saying what he means what he means it, because that’s something he’s not great at. “Stiles, I...liked that lyric. Can you repeat it?”

Stiles freezes, water still dripping from the can, mouth dropped fully open. He makes a strangled noise in his throat.

“See,” Matt says, angry now. “You’re just wasting my time.”

To add insult to injury, Derek doesn’t even look up from Stiles this time, strangely enamoured with the almost *pretty* flush rising in his cheeks.

“Fine, finish the line,” Matt snaps. “All I want to do is find a way back into love...”

“I’m not a writer,” Stiles protests, waving the can at Matt, splashing water all over Derek’s leather couch, which he really should care about, but doesn’t.

“I’m done here,” Matt says, throwing his hands in the air and stalking towards the door. Again, Derek has no fucks to give.

“I can’t make it through without a way back into love,” Stiles finishes, saying the words to Derek, glaring at Derek, maybe like he’s annoyed at Derek for putting him in this position.

Derek, however, quirks up a smirk. He’s just found himself a lyricist.

Stiles, however, disagrees quite profoundly.

“I’m *not* a lyricist,” Stiles says, frowning. “How many more times do I have to say it?”

“Just once more, with feeling,” Derek says shortly, which makes Stiles roll his eyes. “Just think about it. I’ll be performing tonight at the St Regent’s Hotel- come and see me.”

Stiles flushes, all pretty and pink. “If you want a groupie I’m sure you could do better.”

“*Stiles.*” Derek says shortly, pleadingly. If he were the begging sort he’d get down on his knees. He’s not thinking about how humiliating this entire situation is.

“I’ll think about it,” Stiles says firmly, and gets in the elevator. He looks exasperated, and Derek focuses on the whiskey gold of his eyes as the doors slide shut.

Three hours babysitting his niece and his nephew are exactly what Stiles needs to fix the weird mood Derek Hale put him in.

They’re adorable, almost painfully so; case in point, when he gets there, Tori hugs his knee and refuses to let go for five solid minutes until he convinces her that he is staying, he’s not going anywhere just yet. Then she grins at him with gap teeth and asks him how his day has been.

His nephew nods at him from over an Xbox controller, and Stiles grins fondly. Like father like son.

After an intense Mario Kart session, and macaroni cheese, Stiles feels distinctly better.

Until Scott and Allison get home.

Scott picks up immediately on Stiles' weird mood, and has him explain- he coerces him with that weird, slightly whiny way he has, that Stiles can usually tolerate-

"Derek Hale?" Scott asks excitedly. "Oh my God, I used to be such a big fan of *Pop*, I had all their posters and everything, I don't think I can breathe," Scott squeaks, breath descending into gasps.

Allison, who walks back in the room after forcing her eldest into bed (even Stiles, his favourite uncle ever, or his only uncle, couldn't even do that), visibly flinches at Derek's name. Then rolls her eyes at Scott's dramatics.

"Hey," Allison objects half-heartedly. Scott shoots her a daft grin. He's breathing normally again, unfortunately for Stiles, because it means he can pepper Stiles with questions that he doesn't know the answers to.

"I've just been to his apartment twice," Stiles protests, feeling threatened under the dark glare Scott's fixing him with.

"And?" Scott demands. Allison looks uncomfortable.

"And that's it. Well, he's supposed to be writing a new song for Erica, I think, but that's totally secret."

"Erica?" Allison screeches. So they're both crazy. Perfect pair.

Scott shoots her a mildly terrified look, but Allison is passed caring.

"Yeah- and he wants me to do the lyrics, which is ridiculous, right," Stiles says, leaning against the cabinet. "He's performing at the St Regent's tonight-"

"ALLISON I'M GOING OUT," Scott all but screams, and runs from the room. Allison rolls her eyes fondly and leaves, in the opposite direction, like she's used to Scott's obsessive fanatics.

“That wasn’t the end of the story,” Stiles says to himself.

“Come help me change,” Scott shrieks, and sprints back in the room, tugging Stiles.

That’s how, forty five minutes later, Stiles finds himself in a cab speeding downtown, to Derek.

Which was not the plan.

Obtaining the lyricist

Chapter Summary

Derek has to persuade Stiles to come home with him. To write with him, get your heads out of the gutters. Scott is entirely in favour of this plan, but Stiles? He's got some reservations.

Scott is unbearable.

Stiles says this with all the love and sincerity in the world, but Scott is unbearable in the face of something he fanboys over.

There's nothing masculine about the fact that Scott has had to have two pumps of his inhaler and they haven't even stepped in the threshold of the ballroom and he keeps asking Stiles to 'just check my hair, check my *hair*' like it will have changed in the last five minutes. Stiles finds it funny that he's as straight as an arrow and happily married and yet deeply infatuated with the most annoyingly attractive asshole Stiles has ever had the pleasure of meeting. And that's saying something.

Stiles can hear the thump of pop music, and he feels a jolt of nerves.

He hasn't seen Scott this excited about something unrelated to Allison and the kids in *years*. Quite possibly, it was last when they found the Pop music edition of *Singstar*. Scott had practically cried in the DVD and Games section of the department store. His kids had watched in horror.

Tori cried afterwards too, and when Stiles asked, she said it's because she realised that she was cooler than her dad, which is one hundred per cent accurate. Chris asked if he was adopted.

“Scott, take it easy, buddy,” Stiles soothes. Scott is fanning himself. With his cell-phone.

“It’s just, his music got me through my mom and dad’s divorce,” Scott says. Stiles pats his shoulder companionably. “This is so awesome. Derek *Hale* could be my *brother in law*.” His voice goes much higher when he’s excited. Dolphins are crying across the nation, it’s literally that high.

Stiles squeaks indignantly, because Scott? Has finally crossed over to the dark side. The crazy side. Sheesh.

Scott gives him a knowing look, a clear *don’t even try to back out of this, Stiles Scott Stilinski-McCall, I already have your wedding china picked out and it’s fucking beautiful*.

And the worst part of it is, Scott *knows* him; knows that maybe, yeah, he thinks Derek Hale is hot like burning, but come on. Everyone probably thinks that. Everyone who doesn’t actually know the man himself and is just faced with his face and body. Stiles is getting a little sweaty at the thought.

As they step into the ballroom, it’s pretty clear that everyone *does* think that.

The trousers that Isaac is making him wear bring a new definition to the word uncomfortable.

Derek’s pretty sure Vaseline will be a necessity in taking these off.

He doesn’t know if he’s ever going to get the imprint of the studs off his behind.

He can barely breathe, let alone dance, so he’s satisfying the crowd by tapping his feet and moving his arms in a sensuous way. He tries to make it look like that.

In reality, he realises he probably looks like he's trying to bring back the YMCA. He remembers getting drunk with Isaac one Christmas and dancing to it. He'd given Isaac a black eye.

He's embarrassed at being the focus of attention, but that's nothing new. Derek definitely has an onstage persona, otherwise he's not sure he could make it through a show without flushing red and going silent and judgemental.

The women at this show aren't any worse than others he's seen before.

However, there is a young guy who seems really enthusiastic, and Derek blinks, thinking, *at last, Stiles* before realising the guy is Latino and too short to be the lyricist. This guy, however, gets to the front, and seems to be hyperventilating. He's singing louder than Derek is. Without a microphone.

Derek shoots a wary smile at him, recognising the signs of one of those obsessive fans he's not so fond of, but he promptly passes out.

He gets levered up to the stage, and Derek ends the show, but not before saying into the microphone: 'If this belongs to anyone, come claim it.'

Isaac's worried, eyebrows furrowed, and he's a finger away from dialling 911.

There's a burst of sound at the edge of the stage, and Stiles comes sprinting up to them, panting that yes, the collapsed fan belongs to him.

And he blushes. "Well, he's my brother, actually, but you get the picture."

The flush on his cheeks is in no way sexually attractive. Nope.

Derek smirks, because *he knew it*. He knew Stiles would turn up, even if it's just out of curiosity's sake.

“Dammit Scott,” Stiles mutters. Before Derek even realises what he’s doing, Stiles snatches his ice cold water- it’s his only privilege, alright- and tosses it over his brother.

It works like a charm; the guy sputters and groans. Derek raises one unimpressed eyebrow when Stiles passes back his now empty bottle.

“I told you to calm down,” Stiles points out.

“Thanks,” Scott groans. He scrubs a hand over his face, as if to scrub away his embarrassment.

“You have children.”

“I know.” To his own ears, Scott sounds pitiful. Derek thinks he looks like a kicked dog.

“There’s no way I’m not telling them about this, in fact- say cheese!”

A flash of camera light momentarily blinds Derek. Scott groans again.

Stiles’ smile is as blinding as that flash, when he glances at Derek and Isaac, like he’s just remembered they’re there. He tucks his phone away and runs a hand uncertainly through his hair. In fact, it looks like he’s been doing that a lot, lately, and Derek smugly knows it’s because he’s feeling indecisive about being Derek’s lyricist.

“You remember Stiles.” Derek says shortly.

“Nice to see you again,” Stiles says, to Isaac. His eyes trek up and down Derek uncertainly, like he’s not quite sure how to take Derek, which is fine.

Derek’s not sure whether to glare at him with the heat of a thousand suns or lick his face. Choices, choices.

He chooses the glaring.

It’s less scarring for all involved, really.

“*Planted* in my memory,” Isaac says, and Derek inwardly groans. Why does Isaac have to be the charming one?

He raises an eloquent eyebrow at Isaac, a clear *what are you doing you’re supposed to be on my side*, while Stiles helps Scott to stand up and holds him in what looks like a tight embrace.

Isaac just shrugs.

"So you're going to write for me," Derek says, and the amount of smugness in his voice, in his stance instantly raises Stiles's hackles.

"No," Stiles glowers. "I'm only here because my brother has a boner for your music. We're going now."

Scott frowns and folds his arms, looking very much like the stubborn kid Stiles punched on the first day of Kindergarten. Stiles just rolls his eyes, because he knows what a Scott tantrum looks like, alright?

Stiles yanks him behind a curtain so they can argue with more privacy. A whole metres worth of fabric counts as privacy, apparently.

“If you can help Derek *Hale* you should,” Scott whispers. “I mean, he’s a jerk, but this is money.”

Stiles scoffs. “What Kool-Aid are you drinking? I’m not a writer.”

“How about-”

“Fan-fiction doesn’t count, Scott,” Stiles says, voice annoyed. Scott makes a derisive sound.

“This will be good for you,” Scott says. “Since Lydia, you haven’t-”

“Shut *up* Scott,” Stiles hisses.

Derek raises a questioning eyebrow at Isaac, and he shrugs in response from where they’re unabashedly listening in.

“I know you want to do this,” Scott says. Stiles groans at the back of his throat. “And I’m not just talking about Derek Hale.”

There’s a thud and Derek hears Scott huff in complaint.

“I’ll do it if you shut up, before I have the urge to maim and kill you myself,” Stiles says pleasantly.

Scott walks back to Derek and Isaac, grinning all the while at Stiles, who’s frowning and muttering the words, ‘assholes, assholes everywhere’.

Derek doesn't want to be a child and say that's biologically accurate, but there's something in Stiles that just brings out the anal retentive, grumpy teenager in him.

Scott just grins because he knows his brother. He knows that’s Stiles being stubborn and bitter for the sake of it, purposely dragging his heels, and Scott reckons it's because he likes making Derek angry.

“Fine,” Stiles says, voice blunt. “I’ll write for you. But you don’t get to rip my throat out when I can’t do it.”

“I’ll think about it,” Derek acquiesces. Stiles gapes at him.

“That’s him saying, thanks, by the way,” Isaac confides. Stiles pretends to smile before glaring back at Derek with a surprising amount of heat. They glare at each other in silence.

Scott and Isaac shuffle on their feet awkwardly and half-smile at each other. Derek hears Scott invite Isaac over for dinner with his wife and kids. Isaac sounds delighted when he agrees, probably because he lives to annoy Derek, and this is just a job. There's no need to get friendly with Stiles, or his brother.

Stiles sighs, long-suffering- and finally says, “Are we gonna go or just stand here and look pretty?”

“Who ever said you looked pretty?” Derek scoffs, and Isaac’s giving him a

look that clearly reads, *uh, you did about a billion times after the first time we saw him, remember? You compared him to an elf and mooned over his eyes.*

Derek shoots him the finger. Isaac just hides a smirk.

“Many a person, actually, thanks,” Stiles retorts. “Come on. Time’s a’ wasting.”

Scott actually claps his hands together in delight.

“I can’t believe my brother is going home with Derek Hale.”

This time, Scott squawks when Stiles shoves him off the stage.

Derek is stupidly pleased to have Stiles back in his apartment.

Which doesn’t sound great at all, but who gives a fuck? Not Derek, that’s for sure.

He just wants this damn song written.

He has a sneaking suspicion that Stiles will not make this situation easy on him, though.

Stiles seems oddly confident when he stalks into the apartment, throws his crap on top of the piano *again* (it seems he has a death wish) and sighs.

His face looks like he’s deliberately trying to antagonise Derek, and so far, it’s working. Derek scowls and crosses his arms defensively when Stiles tries to touch the piano. A growl may pop out somewhere. Stiles's eyes narrow dangerously.

“As much as this arrangement rocks, I’m going to need three- no, wait- four supplies,” Stiles demands imperiously. Derek raises his eyebrows, because who’s acting like a fucking princess now, hmm?

Stiles counts them off on his fingers. “A notepad, pen, bottle of water and some Reese’s Cups.”

Derek rolls his eyes. He feels like he’s doing that more than he usually does, and he thinks he’s allergic to something in Stiles’ presence because he has literally not stopped doing it since he met Stiles.

He collects the supplies from the cupboard next to the piano, and the fridge.

Stiles looks floored when he sets them next to the overstuffed armchair he’s claimed for his own.

If he wanted to distract Derek, he’s going to have to do a lot better than that.

Like pulling off his shirt, stripping out of it and then reaching down towards his belt buckle before dropping his pants.

Not that that’s a thing that should happen. Derek’s brain needs to shut up.

He needs to focus.

Derek surreptitiously glances at Stiles, who’s licking his lips and frowning down at the blank pad, fingers stretched obscenely around the pen, and legs spread.

Concentration might be a bit too much to ask of Derek when he’s surrounded by someone as distracting (though that doesn’t even seem like an extreme enough word) as Stiles.

“Stay back, what are you doing,” Derek snaps as Stiles drags his armchair towards him with a steely sort of determination in his eyes.

“I can’t write when I’m so far away from my muse,” Stiles says firmly.

No, Derek thinks, you just want to freak me out.

And he would be right- Derek can recognise, even though he technically doesn't know Stiles- Stiles is smirking wickedly, like he's just waiting for Derek to get irritated and toss him out of the apartment. It's not going to happen, for the record; Derek grew up with *Laura* as a sister. His tolerance is surprisingly high.

"You are not trapping me into a corner."

"Guess you're gonna have to come out then, aren't you?" Stiles snipes back, and that's how Derek ends up moving his grand piano at two thirty in the morning for the first time in twelve years.

"I came out in 2002, thanks," Derek mutters, and Stiles trips over his feet into the piano, raking his nails over the shiny surface. He shoots him an unimpressed look and Stiles just stares blankly back.

Stiles adjusts his seat to Derek's right, still too close for Derek to take. Stiles smells good, like his deodorant and warmth and it's too distracting the closer it is. He looks deeply satisfied when he settles back, clutching the pad and pen to his chest.

He stares into the air thoughtfully, and Derek's one hundred per cent certain Stiles is just trolling him.

Derek fights back the urge to glare at Stiles until he spews out lyrics. That's not how the song will be written. He can practically hear Cora's voice in his head; *Jesus, Der, you get more flies with honey than vinegar, try being nice for once.*

Derek's an asshole, it's his base setting, but he knows how to fake a smile. It's just unfortunate that he looks like a class A douche when he does, according to Isaac. But what does Isaac know? He's on dates every Friday and even if they make it to a second date, it inevitably ends with the classic 'It's not me, It's actually you' speech, because Isaac is...special. A special brand of jerk, that is. There's a reason they get on so well.

"I'll get coffee," Derek says awkwardly, getting to his feet and heading for

the kitchen. What he's not expecting is for Stiles to follow him and hop up on the counter.

"Any chance you've got almond flavoured soy milk?" Stiles asks, cracking his neck and back, which doesn't set Derek's nerves on edge, at all. Stiles's delighted grin makes it extremely clear that he'll do that at every given opportunity.

"Yeah, actually," Derek produces the milk and smirks at the way Stiles wilts a little. He thanks whatever deity available that Isaac goes through phases of being healthy, until he breaks down and makes Derek drive to the nearest Krispy Kreme drive through and break out his platinum credit card.

Stiles just kicks back on the counter-top, ignoring Derek's glare that clearly reads *do you realise how gross that is*. It's not that Derek doesn't enjoy the view of Stiles's feet—which is an injustice, by the way, even his fucking *feet* are cute—but he can imagine Laura, the biggest OCD nut he knows, having a fit.

Especially when he licks his fingers and dips them in the sugar pot on the counter-top, which isn't a euphemism but is incredibly sensual and attractive and Derek didn't know he had a hand-kink until the Stilinski bastard came along.

The asshole is being deliberately provocative. In more ways than one, in fact, though he's pretty sure that Stiles doesn't intend to keep rubbing at his stomach, under the hem of his shirt, but that just makes the situation even worse, really, because he's just innately irritating.

Two can play at this game.

Derek, once reseated at the piano proceeds to play every television theme song that he knows over and *over* again. Just a hunch- based on the Firefly badge Stiles has pinned to his messenger bag- that the guy's as much a nerd as Derek's sisters are (and admittedly Derek) but he'd guess Stiles worships his Netflix account.

He watches Stiles's mouth quiver and eyes widen with admiration and smugly thinks that there is no way he won't like Derek even a little bit by the time this ordeal is over.

On the plus side, however, Stiles gets distracted easily, and his eyes keep flicking up from the page to Derek and his hands. Derek can see the internal conflict that unfolds, where Stiles is torn between being amazed that Derek can do what he does, and the desire to continue irritating Derek by not writing.

"Can you stop that? I need to write." Stiles snaps finally, at around four, and Derek grins.

Round 1 goes to Derek.

Round 2 most definitely goes to Stiles.

"Feed me," he whines, hands tight on his coat. Derek's annoyed that he's reduced to a six year old and is holding the other end of the coat. They are effectively having a tug of war over a coat. It's not even a particularly nice coat. Somewhere in Los Angeles, Derek's sisters are cackling.

"You haven't written anything." Derek's voice is a snarl and he tugs on the coat. Stiles -- the bastard, he's such a bastard-- is surprisingly stronger than he looks and his hands are iron-clad.

"What, you gonna starve me until I write you something?"

"Writers get food," Derek persists.

"And bitches get stitches," Stiles snaps threateningly.

Derek's eyes don't travel over Stiles's muscles in response, calculating whether Stiles could take him or not. He doesn't leer over his defined chest, or his broad shoulders, shut up.

“You couldn’t take me,” Derek grunts.

“You sure about that?” Stiles smirks flirtatiously and Derek’s hands go instantly clammy, so he lets go of the jacket. Stiles staggers backwards with a victorious grin and whoops as Derek gets his leather jacket from the stand.

His glare doesn’t shut Stiles up, but he does flinch satisfyingly.

Breakfast is an awkward affair. Mostly because Derek keeps glaring balefully at Stiles, and Stiles can’t actually tear himself away from the asshole’s surprisingly pretty eyes. Derek is actually the best looking asshole he’s ever met. There’s a gay joke in there somewhere. Pun unintended.

Stiles smirks down at the napkin. He ignores the way his stomach rolls at the blank space.

“Look,” Derek sighs, and Stiles holds back on the fist pump because he made Derek Hale crack and also, he’s pretty sure Derek would punch him. “I need to get this song written. This song can be my older sister’s birthday present, which saves me from actually getting her something.”

“Oh?”

“She’s...difficult to buy for.” A look of total fear washes over Derek’s face, and Stiles has a newfound urge to meet the sister that apparently casts the fear of God into Derek Hale.

“Sorry, then, but I’m still not a writer.” Stiles says, setting down his pumpkin spice latte (don’t judge, it’s fucking delicious).

“I think you are, you just don’t realise it—or you don’t want to write. Probably some deep-rooted trauma behind door number two.” Derek’s pretty astute, apparently. Emphasis on the pretty.

“What, and you want me to talk about it? With you? Yeah, right.” Stiles

snorts, because the image of kicking back on a leather couch while Derek stares at him, nodding thoughtfully, is frickin' hilarious.

"Yes."

"I thought you hated it when I talk," Stiles points out, because the stink eye he gets whenever he opens his mouth makes it pretty damn obvious that Derek cannot stand him. Maybe it's just the atmosphere in the apartment just makes Derek hate everyone. Maybe it's possessed. The thought of Derek Hale going all paranormal activity is a frankly disturbing thought, in all honesty.

Derek rolls his eyes like an angst ridden pre-teen, complete with a twitch from those godly eyebrows. "I hate it when you can't focus on writing a song that will get us both paid. So if you talking about this will get us a song, then go ahead."

He gestures generously and Stiles bites his lip. It's not like he's revealing anything Derek couldn't find out by himself-- though Stiles has a faint suspicion that he's allergic to the internet-- but the story is embarrassing, in all honesty. It doesn't paint Stiles in a flattering light either.

"I fell in love with Lydia Martin in third grade," Stiles says, and Derek sits back in his seat expectantly. He breathes out. "She was smart and mean and perfect, and I put her on the biggest pedestal I could find. Metaphorically. I pursued this crush for eleven years, even though she got third-grade married to Jackass Bitchmore, who was a few years ahead of us in school."

Derek startles and his face loses all colour. "Jackson Whittemore?"

"The very same."

In all honesty, Derek remembers the terrifying girlfriend Jackass --sorry, Jackson--had, and probably still has; they were nauseating on a level that disturbed Derek to his very core.

"I was convinced that we had a shot. I thought that I loved her enough,

y'know. But anyway. The point is when I turned seventeen and Jackson moved away, I decided to really give *us* a shot- I wrote her an ode; Ode to Lydia."

Derek looks horrified.

"Anyway, so I gave her the thing, and she read it out on the loudspeakers in the middle of lunch. She said, and I quote, *to the Nice Guy™ who gave me this, take a hint*. She then proceeded to give literary criticism on the quality of my writing, starting with, *it's hilarious and has the boy heard of full stops?*"

"That's...horrible." Derek proffers.

"No," Stiles shakes his head. "I deserved it. I couldn't take a hint, and I didn't even really realise that I was being *that* guy. I hate that guy. That guy should fuck himself on a cactus."

"Wait..." horror dawns on Derek's face. "You're not..."

"Samuel Steel? Yeah, I am," Stiles says bitterly. He's referring to the character in Lydia's semi-biography, the best-seller, New York Times chart topper, the character that can't seem to take a hint and doggedly pursues the main character even though she's in love with the love of her life. His ode is in the book, in fact. The book mentions the fact that she liked the attention, and thought that they could be friends, but he couldn't take a hint and besides, why would she date someone who couldn't even *write*? Stiles abruptly realises he says the last part out loud.

"Ever since, I haven't been able to write properly," Stiles admits, scratching his head. "Not without those words echoing in my head."

"But she was wrong," Derek says.

"No, she wasn't. That's the worst part. I *was* a jerk who couldn't take a hint. And she's right about the writing part, too," Stiles replies. His cheeks are flamed red at telling the story.

“Maybe then,” Derek says firmly. “But you’re different now, right?”

“Yes,” Stiles agrees, and it’s true, he is different. He’s a serial one-night stander, he doesn’t fall easily, and he’s terrified that he’s going to die alone. His dad is a one-true love kinda guy- Stiles’s mom- and Stiles is terrified that he’s tricked himself into thinking that Lydia is his one true love, and no one will ever match up.

“You were a jackass, but she didn’t need to turn you down quite like that.” Derek says, trying for comforting, and it surprisingly works. “And you can write. I heard you, Stiles. You can do this.”

“Thanks.”

He looks over the table at Derek, who’s watching him pensively, and smiles a little when he meets his eyes, and wonders if he’s met his match.

Their little heart to heart doesn’t solve anything right away, of course. Stiles isn’t struck with inspiration, his muse doesn’t arrive in a Porsche, but he does feel infinitely better about the situation.

He bickers with Derek on the streets of New York as they continue to walk- - “because walking increases circulation, Derek, circulation makes things go faster and you’ll get your lyrics faster, it’s like magic”—and that’s when the second line hits him.

“Holy shit, I’ve got it,” Stiles babbles and Derek literally *yanks* him into the nearest stationary store. He snatches a pad and a pen and Derek snarls at the assistant that comes over to complain as he scribbles down the line.

On the page, it doesn’t look like much, but it fills Stiles with an unholy sort of glee-- *I’ve been living with a shadow overhead*—and the knowledge that Derek’s right, though he’s certain he’ll never think that thought again. He *can* do this.

He grins at Derek’s look of surprise and wonder. “Let’s rock this bitch.”

The lyrics will finally get you

Chapter Summary

The lyrics are finally written.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

The lyrics don't exactly flow out of Stiles after that point, but it's a close thing.

He *pours* himself into this song, it's almost embarrassing, he's being paid to put his history into a song and slap the hook *A Way Back Into Love* in it, but it works. Somehow, he pieces the lyrics together, feeling self-conscious, and Derek builds a melody around it.

They have a pretty straight-forward pattern; Stiles will chew at his pen, Derek will huff and fiddle with notes and chords, inspiration will strike and he'll write the words down before anything, but then he'll say them out loud and Derek will nod approvingly.

"Cloud sounds right," Stiles insists.

"If you say so," Derek snaps back, running a hand through his hair.

"Darkness just *sounds* better-"

"I get the words, you get the pretty tune, now shut up," Stiles replies,

shooing Derek's eyes away from his page. "Besides, you *would* think that. It looks like darkness vomited in your wardrobe."

Derek rolls his eyes but does do as he's told. With one small act of rebellion: he changes the notes at the start. What Stiles doesn't know won't kill him. Probably.

"It can't sound like an article to Dear Abby, Stiles," Derek points out, scanning the line *I've been lonely for so long*.

"What are you implying about my life?"

"If the shoe fits."

Derek ducks as a pen gets tossed at his face. It's not even a euphemism.

Stiles is looking at Derek's posters when the line *trapped in the past I just can't seem to move on* smacks him full-on in the face.

It just *fits*; Derek, with his multiple neon nineties posters displaying a young Jackson, which makes Stiles grimace, Allison's father, which is just *weird*, and Derek with *huge* hair, not to mention that the only magazines he has are ones which have articles with him in them, is quite clearly trapped in his past.

Stiles doesn't think about the fact that before this, he was trapped by his past, mostly Lydia and the fact his mom always wrote, but that's relevant too.

"You guys can go *oh oh oh* or some shit like that at this point," Stiles gestures below the line *I can't make it through without a way back into love*, the first line he made up, and Derek frowns.

“We- and I speak for the singing community when I say this- don’t go *oh oh oh*,” Derek says.

“Sure you don’t. Tell that to Beyonce.”

“My sister would break your jaw if she heard you talking smack about Beyonce.”

“Which sister?” Stiles asks.

“Cora,” Derek says, wincing as he imagines Laura and Stiles ever meeting—he’s pretty certain they would team up and plan world domination—because they would ruin his life.

“What fresh hell is *this*?” Derek sputters, choking back the rancid coffee. If he didn’t know better, he’d say the milk had gone off, but he made an edible cup only a few hours ago, at eight a.m.

Stiles’s exhausted face, topped with its stress-mussed hair pokes into the kitchen and he gives Derek the stink eye. “It’s coffee.”

“No it’s not,” Derek assures him, tipping the drink into the ficus on his counter. It’s not like Stiles hasn’t already overwatered it.

As it turns out, Stiles knows nothing about plants. Derek tells him it’s a good thing he’s pretty.

“The chords before the second verse still aren’t right,” Stiles insists, going back to his claimed seat.

Derek sighs and rubs his eyes.

"Are you even listening to me?"

"I'm open to your suggestions." He says magnanimously, but it still sounds like a threat to Stiles's ears.

In reality, maiming Stiles isn't a good idea, but it's sounding better by the hour.

They sing the entirety of their song—as much of it as they have, anyway—to Deaton at three a.m. and he looks unimpressed the entire time.

He informs them that he's tone deaf, and tells them to get out of his lobby. Derek steals mints from his tray as they brush past and they leave the wrappers in the elevator.

“The stars refuse to shine,” Stiles mutters, sounding supremely insane as he stares out the window at the cloudy night. Derek's folded over the keys and Stiles wonders if he knows he's been playing the Star Wars theme song on repeat for the better part of three hours.

Stiles also wonders if Derek actually likes him, because there have been minimal signs that point in that direction, and another line hits him: *I've been searching but I just don't see the signs.*

“I'm a genius,” Stiles tells Derek, and he pretends that the groan that the other man produces is an agreeing one.

Stiles is irritated to note that Derek's personality shines a light on his: he brings out the best, and the worst in him. Like bickering for twenty minutes straight on Stiles's line about needing direction. Stiles does back down and admit that it doesn't sound exactly right at that point in the verse, but he slips some salt into Derek's coffee when he's not looking.

The choked off curses he spits out after make him feel better, in any case.

They also help him spew out another line of his baby: *I've been looking for someone to shed some light.*

“What even *is* this?” Stiles asks through a mouthful of what’s supposed to be porridge, but he has his doubts. Derek’s sipping a protein shake and shuddering frequently.

“I told you, we’ve got ten hours left, we’re *not* wasting time by going out to get food,” Derek says. He looks like he’s about to puke.

“So we’re eating all the food in your apartment.”

“Yes.”

“So I have to eat crappy porridge.”

“You can have the shake,” Derek offers and with one glance at the grey, sludgy concoction, Stiles decides that he’s actually pretty good. Until in his next mouthful, something *moves*.

“Nope. No. I’m done.” Stiles snaps and spits out the mouthful in the sink. He ignores Derek’s look of outrage.

“There’s got to be something for my soul somewhere,” Stiles says dramatically, flinging himself at the cupboards. Derek catches his arm and looks at him thoughtfully, head tilted. In all honesty, he looks like a puppy and his face is extremely distracting this close, wow. His hand is like a brand against his skin and Stiles might lose his words, which is very unfortunate. Derek’s lips are a thing of beauty, really, a cupid’s bow and a full bottom lip. Under Stiles’s eyes, they part and Stiles forgets to breathe.

“That line,” Derek says. Stiles’s mouth is dry and he swallows. He can’t remember his own name. Derek smiles a little, white teeth flashing.

“What?”

Derek picks up Stiles’s pad, his lifeline, and the line *there’s got to be something for my soul somewhere* is written in his Disney princess script.

Stiles thinks, idly, that he's not the best person to write a love song. He's actually a contender for the worst person. Because he usually only looks for someone to get him through the night, not someone like Derek, who seems, in spite of his first appearances, to be genuinely thoughtful, a little shy, maybe, but dry and sarcastic and caring, especially when he shows Stiles pictures of him and his sisters on his ancient Nokia.

Another line of his masterpiece is born. *Not somebody just to get me through the night.*

Seven hours and counting to go.

Stiles is watching Derek's hands move over the piano's keys and possibly getting a boner. His fingers, Jesus, are just thick and starkly tan and pornographic as they slide across the ivories.

He glances up to Derek's face as he bites his lip, fiddling with the notes at the end of the last verse, even though Stiles reassured him, twice, that they're perfect. Stiles probably should feel a bolt of irritation, because Derek's just being a perfectionist, but all he feels is a wave of fondness wash over him.

He knows he's not alone in thinking that because Derek sometimes looks at him with a heated gaze, like he's trying to burn through Stiles and *understand*, and he just smiles at him with a flash of teeth and a curve of his lips, and Stiles gets the feeling that he doesn't usually smile much.

As the lines *And if I open my heart again/I'm hoping love will be there for me in the end* flow through his head, Stiles doesn't even flinch, though he knows that feeling what he's feeling—for an almost total stranger, aside from the fact that he feels like he's always known Derek, has always bitched at him, bickered with him, snapped at him—is absurd, but the lines fit. And they work.

He relays them to Derek, and the dickhead looks at Stiles with an almost *advanced* level of eyefucking. Stiles feels like he should be wearing a condom and be at least ninety per cent more naked. He's not wearing a plaid shirt or a hoodie, so he's half-way there.

“You,” he says abruptly.

“What?” Stiles snaps out of the frankly embarrassing inner monologue that’s admiring Derek’s eyelashes and watches as Derek takes the pen and pad out of his hands. He crosses over the last line and Stiles yelps *sacrilege*.

“You will be there for me in the end,” Derek says, scratching his head almost sheepishly.

Stiles thinks it’s perfect that their song—Derek’s lived at his pianos for three days straight, has given his fingertips bruises over how much he’s written and played, it’s definitely his song as much as it is Stiles’s—the last two lines of their song have been written by both of them.

“Maybe,” Stiles says petulantly and does *not* grin dopily when Derek rolls his eyes in a way that seems more fond than anything else.

After this, Derek disappears into his studio. Stiles pops his head around the door at one point and sees Derek doing sit ups by his piano, when they’ve only got two hours left. He snaps something about *taking it easy, Shang*, mostly because he’s a jerk when he’s exhausted, which he is, and Derek shoos him out.

He even leads Stiles to his bed, which would make him flush in other circumstances, but he curls up under the purple silk covers as the sounds of Derek’s music wash over his head.

Derek wakes him up an hour later with a gentle shake to his shoulders. Stiles snaps awake, shouting about Erica, and Derek bites back a grin.

“Come on. You’ve got to sing the girl part.” He tows Stiles to the mic stand and sets him down as he fetches two sets of headphones. Stiles is partially awake and maybe hugging the mic stand.

Derek tugs him away from it and starts the track. Stiles mumbles the first two lines before Derek shuts him down.

“Remember, we’re singing this to humans, not animals with supersonic hearing,” he suggests and Stiles scowls.

It works, though, and this time they manage to sing the entirety of their song, their baby, their *preciousss* (yeah, he definitely needs sleep) and Derek privately admires how low and fucking *heartfelt* Stiles’s voice is:

I’ve been living with a shadow overhead,

I’ve been sleeping with a cloud above my bed,

I’ve been lonely for so long

Trapped in the past, I just can’t seem to move on.

I’ve been hiding all my hopes and dreams away,

Just in case I’ll ever need them again someday.

I’ve been setting aside time,

To clear a little space in the corners of my mind.

All I want to do is find a way back into love

I can’t make it through without a way back into love

Oh oh oh

*I've been watching but the stars refuse to shine,
I've been searching but I just don't see the signs.
I know that it's out there,
There's gotta be something for my soul somewhere.
I've been looking for someone to shed some light,
Not just somebody to get me through the night.
I could use some directions,
And I'm open to your suggestions.*

*All I want to do is find a way back into love
I can't make it through without a way back into love
And if I open my heart again,
I'm hoping you'll be there for me in the end.
Oh oh oh.*

Derek doesn't enjoy how close he and Stiles are, how they're singing the song *to* each other, when it's such a love song. He doesn't enjoy it. At all. Honest.

The cab down to Erica's helipad in lower Manhattan is filled with an

anxious sort of tension and Stiles keeps fidgeting. It's completely different to his fidgeting back in the apartment, because it was just habit then, but he's shaking now.

Derek just rolls his eyes and tells him to calm down, Christ. He also puts a hand on top of his, just to steady him, shut it, and doesn't obsess over how his eyes flit back to Derek's, wide and earnest. The feel of his skin isn't awe-inspiring either.

Derek shoves Stiles out of the cab and up the stairs to the helipad as fast as he can. His phone is bleeping, going insane, because he set so many reminders. He just grits his teeth and shoves the CD and the player at Erica.

She smiles a glossy red grin at Stiles and Derek.

"Batman," she nods, and Derek abruptly realises that Stiles lost his hoodie and shirt at some point, and now wears a simple black tee with a familiar yellow logo at its centre.

"Catwoman," Stiles says, inclining his head towards her black, skin-tight pant-suit. She beams.

"Maybe you should be more interested in the song than my lyricist?" Derek suggests, voice ice-cold and almost unfamiliar. He doesn't miss the smirk that Boyd and Erica swap, or the questioning glance that Stiles shoots his way.

She puts one headphone in, and holds the other out for Boyd. Derek can hear the faint sounds of his singing over the close, deafening *whirr* of the helicopter blades.

Stiles smiles at him reassuringly and reaches to take his hand. Derek maybe sighs at how good Stiles's skin feels.

"She's gonna hear me singing, it'll ruin it," Stiles mutters.

"Shut up, it will be fine." Derek replies, squeezing his hand tighter.

The helicopter blades are in full swing when Erica and Boyd pull out the earphones. Erica sighs dramatically and gives Derek a hug, which is uncomfortable because she's a) got a lot of hair and b) apparently bathes in Chanel perfume. He doesn't glare as Erica encompasses Stiles in a hug, or frown especially hard as she mutters, "Damn, you *are* cute". Those are things that don't happen.

He's on tenterhooks as much as anyone else as Erica stares at them pensively for a minute or two. Boyd's her silent, Zen counterpart.

"This is the song I've been looking for," Erica bursts out and Stiles yells *YES* loudly. Derek feels his knees go weak.

Erica smirks at them both before stalking to her helicopter. Derek sees where she makes her flight assistant cry but that's only for a second before he's got a handful of Stiles, who hugs the life out of him, his hard, lithe body pressed close.

Derek pulls him close, holds him tight, and his deodorant and coffee smell just washes over him, making him salivate while Stiles whoops. He holds Stiles with one hand as his phone rings, Isaac's obnoxious Candy Shop (it speaks to his soul, apparently) ringtone. He flips it open and Isaac's going insane, demanding whether they got it or not, and Derek says as much, and he screams down the phone.

He hears an unfamiliar laugh at the other end, and Isaac shuts up, muttering about the deal but Derek can hear him smiling.

"Where are you? Dinner?" Derek demands, and Isaac makes an affirmative sound. Derek knows Isaac's go to place for dinner, and it's the Italian place on twenty forth street.

"We're going out," Derek tells Stiles, and the grin that lights up Stiles's face probably shouldn't make Derek's emotions light up like a Christmas tree, but there you have it.

Chapter 4

Chapter Summary

Confrontations are not Derek's forte. He may need some sensual healing, if you catch my drift.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

“I think I’m in shock,” Derek admits, mind still replaying their success, Erica's words, *this is the song*. He can barely stand not touching Stiles. He isn't a hugger which is why this is such a disturbing experience. Isaac grins from across the table and Stiles shakes his head.

“Personally, I’m having an out-of-body experience,” Stiles agrees, fingers steepling under his chin as he stares at the menu. Derek can see his indecision over whether ordering the entire left side of the menu is a little overdramatic, but he tells Isaac he was starved for three days, and Danny definitely thinks Derek’s a barbarian.

It’s not just because he’s wearing sweatpants and a white tee that have definitely seen better days. He hasn’t even looked at his hair. Isaac looked torn between having an aneurysm and fucking Danny’s lights out, so Derek’s glad to be here, really.

The restaurant is familiar, grouped into little leather booths with individual candles and flowers on the ceramic tables. The food’s slightly overpriced, but it’s not like Derek can’t exactly afford it.

“I like your suit,” Stiles tells Isaac’s date, Danny, and he dimples at Stiles.

“It’s Armani,” Danny says and Stiles smiles politely. His eyes drift behind Danny’s head for an instant and he ducks under the table. Unfortunately, he does it so quickly that he smacks his head. Derek can hear his pained groan.

Danny looks wildly confused and Isaac looks horrified. Derek abruptly thinks it’s a good sign he’s trying to impress Danny, which means their date actually means something.

He looks behind Danny, and because life’s a bitch, Lydia Martin and Jackson sweep into the restaurant, entourage and all. Derek frowns as Stiles wriggles out from under the table and books it to the bathroom.

“Excuse us,” Derek says. He follows Stiles to the bathroom, where Derek can hear his groans from behind the heavy wooden door.

“Stiles?”

“Derek.”

“What are you doing?”

“Having an existential crisis, you mind?”

“Not really.” Derek sits on the other side of the door, even though he thinks his lyricist has finally lost it. Not that he ever had it.

“She’s *here*,” Stiles whines and Derek doesn’t roll his eyes.

“I noticed.”

“With *Jackson*.”

“I noticed that too.”

Derek’s spoken to Jackass since the incident that ruined his career--unfortunately, it may have involved a few glasses of scotch at Laura’s

insistence that he needed liquid courage, and he got tossed out of and barred from the Olive Garden on fifth avenue—but that doesn't mean Derek wants to confront Jackson anymore than he wants to strip naked and sing *Copacabana*. He detests Barry Mannilow, if that clarifies that metaphor at all.

The door swings open and Derek almost slams into the tiles, but Stiles drags him across the carpet into the bathroom to join him in his pity fest. Derek's momentarily surprised at his strength before he realises how disgusting it is to sit on the bathroom floor. But misery loves company and all that crap. Stiles is flushed, hands running through his hair as he paces the floor. Derek's a little affronted at how stressed he looks when, in comparison, Stiles was practically *meditating* these past few days. He's such a dick.

"I've always imagined telling her that I'm sorry, you know," Stiles admits. "But also telling her that she didn't need to write about me, you know?"

"I can imagine."

"Because I'm so inconsequential, I'm a literal bug under her heel, she didn't need to put *me* into her book."

"Don't talk about yourself like that," Derek says, appalled, poking Stiles's arm. Stiles swats at him.

"But it's true."

"She's not god."

"She might as well be," Stiles protests. Derek cuffs him on the back of his head and Stiles swallows. Derek may or may not watch his Adam's apple bob and swallow convulsively.

"We can't hide in here forever," Derek says, as gentle as he knows how. Stiles nods miserably and shoves his face into his hands. "But if there were a time to confront Lydia Martin, it would be now-- you've just written a

song for Erica, Stiles—and now, technically, you’re a Grammy-worthy lyricist.”

Stiles watches Derek with his huge eyes, and a shock of warmth flows through him.

“I can’t see her like this,” Stiles finally protests, gesturing to his clothes. Derek can see splashes of coffee and where the ink from his pen has spilled on his jeans and his hands and is smudged—not unattractively, fuck—along his cheekbone.

“You look homeless,” Derek agrees and Stiles gapes, because was that strictly necessary.

Derek casts his mind back to the table, and it hits him—Danny’s about the same size as Stiles—maybe a little bigger, but it’ll work.

“Wait here.” Derek says firmly, pressing down his shoulders, and Stiles huffs as Derek slips out the bathroom.

He works his way back to their table, where Isaac and Danny are involved in a close conversation, and coughs loudly. Isaac looks like he wants to murder him for interrupting.

“Danny, I need you to come with me to the bathroom,” Derek says. Danny sputters in horror, mouth open like a goldfish’s, and his head swings to Isaac.

“He’s a good guy,” Isaac says darkly, eyes flitting up to Derek in a way that clearly reads he will gut him at a later date, medical assistance optional.

Danny looks thoroughly disturbed but does follow him back to the bathroom, arms crossed, frown clear on his face.

“I need you to swap clothes with Stiles.” Derek’s never had weirder words pass his lips, and this is saying something, because his baby sister teaches pole dancing for a living and the other teaches in an all boys private school.

Danny looks like he's waiting to be conned, but nods, probably only because Isaac thinks he's a good guy, which bodes well for Isaac.

Stiles pops his dishevelled head out of the bathroom and smiles weakly at Danny.

He explains quickly what he wants to do and Danny dimples at him and with a roll of his eyes, goes in the bathroom. Derek fights back the unfamiliar urge to grin and leans against the wall.

Danny walks out the bathroom wearing Stiles's shirt, pants and shoes, and they're surprisingly both long and loose on him. He grumbles when he has to tug Stiles out of the bathroom, dragging his feet like Bambi on the ice-rink. Damn Laura and her obsession over all things Disney.

"Stop being stupid." Derek can hear the eye roll in Danny's voice.

Stiles staggers out, tugging on the cuffs of the tight, black jacket, and all the air abruptly leaves Derek's chest. He has to fight back a wheeze.

The pants wrap around his legs obscenely and the white shirt highlights his long, pale neck, which Derek *salivates* at; he wants to sink his teeth into the skin under his jaw and make him *whine*. Cliff notes; he fills out the suit impeccably. His shoulders are impossibly broad, the fabric straining, and Derek has to remind himself that getting a boner is inappropriate.

Especially as it's a boner over what appears to be *sex* hair. Shit.

"Just get it dry-cleaned and give it back to Isaac," Danny says dryly and with a slap to Stiles's shoulder, goes back to the table.

Derek's still gawping at Stiles.

"It doesn't really fit." Stiles says, tugging at the collar, flushed red.

"It fits perfectly." Derek assures him, and it's embarrassing how rough his

voice is. He has to clear his throat twice.

Stiles smirks and then sighs; he looks like he's mentally preparing himself for the horror of what he's about to do. He looks like he'd rather be walking out into a zombie apocalypse and it says something for Derek's mental capacities that he agrees; zombies have nothing on Lydia 'get in my way and I will destroy you' Martin and Jackass.

Stiles goes white when he reaches their table. Vomit-white. Derek briefly entertains the thought of Stiles *puking* all over Jackass and Lydia and has to stifle back a snicker.

Derek can see how sweaty his palms are and briefly thinks, *I should stop this*, but it's too late because the red-haired equivalent of Cruella DeVille (Stiles would make an excellent Dalmatian, damn those lickable moles) has already spotted him. Maybe she wants to use his beauty to sustain immortality, Derek doesn't know, but her smirk suggests she wants to do awful things to Stiles, things that Hannibal Lector would approve of, so who knows what will happen.

"Stiles," she gushes, throws her arms over his shoulders. Stiles stutters and sweat visibly starts to drip down his forehead. Jackass is all arrogant smiles and checking his make-up at the table, ignoring Derek, which is mature; this is coming from the guy that got kicked out of the Disney store with both of his sisters last year for singing along too loudly with the music on the loudspeaker. Apparently the store manager could not and was not willing to feel the love tonight.

"I...had a pen and paper," Stiles says dumbly. He begins to hum the opening bars to *A Way Back Into Love* and Derek winces internally.

"He put together good lyrics," Derek says gruffly and Lydia rolls her eyes. Derek's hit by a wave of dislike and forces down the thought, *what did Stiles ever see in her*; that way lies pointless jealousy and irritation and he needs to focus.

“Shedding light,” Stiles says intelligently and Derek grits his teeth.

“What Stiles wanted to tell you was that he thinks you were unnecessarily cruel when you put his story in your book,” Derek snaps. Lydia laughs mockingly and shakes her head, going to sit back down.

“And that you were petty and childish in putting it in there when he was just a stupid kid.”

“I can do what I want, Mr Hale. It’s called the First Amendment.” Lydia says, and smiles beatifically at Stiles. “It was great seeing you, Stiles. It’s nice to know some things don’t change.”

“Now wait a minute,” Derek snaps, hand going to her shoulder. Instead, Jackson’s there in its place, glowering at Derek. His face is the same, all smirk, no depth, and Derek actively wants to punch his face in, which isn’t an entirely new impulse for him.

“You and your pathetic excuse for a friend need to back off.” Jackson informs him. “Truth is, he’s a creep who can’t take no for an answer. Go find another restaurant; we don’t need to breathe in your mediocrity.”

Now Derek does get angry, and he shoves ineffectually at Jackson’s shoulder.

Apparently Jackson feels the same because he does punch Derek. In the mouth, but the sentiment is still there.

Derek reels back, but Jackson’s swifter than he looks, and he kicks Derek in the ribs.

Danny and Isaac have to pull them apart in the end, and by this point, Derek’s face has been shoved in the butter.

“Ow,” Derek complains, as Stiles hauls him to the couch.

“Yeah, well, you deserve it,” Stiles tells him, before stalking to the kitchen. From the sounds of it, he’s rootling around the ice drawer. “You didn’t need to defend my virtue.”

Derek just harrumphs from the couch and Stiles rolls his eyes as he puts the ice-pack to Derek’s lips. His eyes are glued to Derek’s split bottom lip and flit back up to his eyes occasionally.

Derek finds himself distracted by Stiles’s eyes this close.

It feels like nothing to just lean forward and press their lips together; it’s dry, chaste and impossibly sweet. Stiles’s lips, just the feel of them, are enough to make his body shiver.

“Are we doing that now?” Stiles breathes, lips against Derek’s still. His eyes are electric.

“I think we just did.” It seems impossible that they’ve only known each other for five days—it feels like this is a lifetime coming and Derek can barely breathe with him so distant. Laura is right; he does turn into a pre-pubescent girl sometimes. Shit. She is going to make his life a living nightmare when she finds out about Stiles.

“Good,” Stiles grins and ducks down again. “This doesn’t mean I’m not mad at you.”

“You deserve better than Lydia,” Derek tells him. He sits up straight, eyes boring into Derek like he’s trying to figure him out. He wants to tell him that his sisters have long-since attempted to understand what goes on in his ‘twisted little head’—Laura’s words—but he seems to have swallowed his tongue.

“Are you going to buy me flowers?” Stiles asks solemnly and laughs when Derek scowls automatically. Stiles’s fingers go to the furrow between his eyebrows and he smooths it out, kissing the skin. Derek realises it’s stupid to want to smile because it makes Stiles happy, but there you have it.

Stiles ducks back down to his lips and the air between them is electrifying and intimate. With a barely recognisable sigh, Derek tilts his head and their lips collide again.

He sucks Derek's bottom lip into his mouth, suckling gently and Derek can't help but whimper inaudibly. Stiles smirks at the small sound and gently deepens the kiss; hot, velvet brushes of tongue against tongue make Derek *shudder* and he will forever maintain that he's whimpering because he's in pain still.

Stiles's hand flies to the back of Derek's head and he tries not to watch it go because, fuck, Stiles's *hands* and Derek already feels like he's getting embarrassingly hard from one kiss.

He pulls away from Stiles and this time, it's *his* mouth that looks like it's been punched and curls into a moue of dissatisfaction that he's not lip to lip with Derek still. They're slick with spit and Derek can't help but lean forward and bite at them, a little.

The whimper that Stiles produces is *extremely* gratifying.

However, he takes back his positive opinion of Stiles when he straddles Derek and *bites* his neck, the skin blooming under his talented tongue. He tugs his shirt up and off with an eager sound and soon his mouth is back, hot and wet against his skin, where it belongs.

Stiles is even more obnoxious than he thought he'd be, which is pleasantly surprising and aggravating all at the same time.

Derek may or may not make a sound like an injured animal and Stiles takes that to mean that he's allowed to sprinkle love-bites across his upper torso randomly. Derek, of course, has no objections, because he's had daydreams about Stiles's mouth that turned out to be nowhere near as good as the real thing.

His nails scratch at Derek's chest and legs as he sheds his clothes eagerly and Derek is helpless to stop him from doing anything he wants, because, as

stupid as it sounds, he just wants what Stiles wants. He has what he knows is an unattractive smirk on his face as he peels Stiles out of the goddamn suit, perhaps palming at his ass more than necessary, but hey, it's a nice ass, can you blame him.

Stiles tugs him to his feet and he groans, fighting the movement, even as he's pulled to what feels like the centre of the room. He's too busy choking down the surge of *heat* as Stiles rakes his teeth across one of his nipples, though he's squeezing Stiles's ass and kneading his obscene head of hair with the other hand.

Stiles pushes Derek back against the piano and he tries to object for a half-second before Stiles licks into his mouth again. Let it be said for the record that Stiles Stilinski is one hell of a distraction, particularly when he climbs him like a goddamned tree and wraps his legs around Derek's waist—he's had bad thoughts about those legs—and flips them around so that he's sitting on the closed piano lid, Derek between his thighs.

They pant in each other's faces for a few seconds before Derek dives back in, hoping that Stiles's lips block out the pleased sound he makes when he tastes him, but judging by the smirk that he feels against his lips he's not so lucky.

Stiles's hands are fluttering, dancing across his skin, leaving goddamn sparks in their wake and it means something when Derek starts thinking in potential song lyrics.

"I want to taste you," Derek murmurs against his lips, all attempts at grace and subtlety gone. It's worth it for the way that Stiles *moans* against his throat, mouth falling slack and wet against Derek's hot skin. Guess that's something he wants too. Who knew.

The hot burning line of Stiles's erection against his own was a clue,

He takes that as a good sign and slides to his knees, flames burning in the pit of his stomach because he *wants*. He wants this so badly, he wants the taste of Stiles on his tongue, the weight of him, he wants to know Stiles's

body in all the ways it can be known.

It feels like an injustice that they haven't done this before, in all honesty, like this is something that is his and belongs to him and him alone, and if he doesn't get what he needs, then he'll fall apart. It's a groundbreaking feeling, for someone like Derek. He's not used to needing people.

With every brush of Derek's fingertips against Stiles's pants he sucks in a breath, like it physically hurts to have his hands on him, which is a heady sensation, if only for the whines that Stiles keeps producing.

He laps at the head of Stiles's cock, the taste exploding on his tongue, the momentous moment emphasised by Stiles's wordless keens.

He figures out exactly how to torture Stiles and takes great pleasure—it's embarrassing how hard he is in his jeans—in driving him mad.

He discovers that kittenish laps, thumbing just below the head of his cock, swallowing him down to the root and moaning are not the best ideas—because Stiles thrust his hips, which was painful, don't get him wrong, but the sheer hotness of the image overcame the slight pain—but best of all, just light touches from his hands to his balls, his perineum and the tops of his thighs have his legs shaking like he was being electrocuted.

He fists Stiles's cock, pre-come slicking the way and he gets his hands on it for three strokes before Stiles knocks him away with a yelp.

"Can't come yet," his smile is impossibly dirty. "I want to come when I'm in you. That's okay, right?"

Derek's wanton moan suggests that he would be amenable to that.

Stiles takes an unnecessary amount of time finding lubricant, because he is a torturer. Who is *mean*. Christ, sex makes him stupid.

It feels that Stiles takes an inordinate amount of time stretching him open on those obscene fingers of his, watching him ride them with an impressive amount of concentration; he would watch, like Stiles is avidly doing, but

he's so close to coming, he just can't bear to. He has to stifle a shout when Stiles ducks down and licks around his fingers and Jesus, he can't bear this. He can't take a second longer without coming.

Stiles, because he's a bastard, decides that that is the perfect time to pull away and play hunt the condom. If he doesn't get inside him in the next minute, Derek decides, the police will be playing hunt the body part. He already knows exactly where in Central Park he'll bury the body.

He's gratified by the way Stiles groans when he has to slick himself up, fisting his cock, but his eyes zoom in on where Derek's clenching around open air, feeling slick and empty, and wanting him more than anything.

"Sh," Stiles croons and Derek barely bites back a whimper. "I've got you, you're so good, so *good*, Derek."

Stiles lifts one of Derek's bent legs and it makes him whine, because he's doing it because he wants better access to Derek, and he'll more than gladly give it, even if it destroys him. Which it feels like it will, if he ever gets round to actually fucking him against his piano. The image is hotter than it has any right to be.

Derek gasps, trying to cover up the sound, even as his hands claw at Stiles's shoulders to get him to do something, anything as he inches in slowly, chuffs of breath escaping that suggest he's as wound up as Derek. He pauses when he's balls deep and Derek *snarls*. Stiles cackles and it may or may not wind him up further.

The first thrust leaves him speechless, breathless, incapable to do anything but gasp for air and clutch at Stiles to keep him grounded. The slick, filthy sound that he makes thrusting into Derek is mind-blowing.

Stiles slowly breaks Derek down into a sobbing wreck, murmuring at how good and tight Derek is for him, how perfect he is, and he's not even sure what his last name is. He claws at Stiles's broad shoulders, wanting more, harder, and after panting out that that's exactly what he wants, Stiles *grins*, all teeth.

It's a good thing that he's so out of it otherwise he would kill Stiles for clambering on top of his piano and making Derek ride him like a prized stallion. He feels absolutely filthy, because this is his piano, his sole way of earning a living, and it's fitting, isn't it, that Stiles has interrupted his life in the space of three days and corrupted what he knows and loves; he'll never be able to walk in this damn room without thinking about this.

There are sparks of electricity as Stiles brushes across his prostate on almost every push, *Jesus*, that somewhat make up for it. He thinks.

The position takes Stiles deeper into his body, though, and Derek's head is tossed back, mouth torn to pieces from where he's been biting at it to cover the never-ending litany of embarrassing sounds that want to break out at the sensation of Stiles's cock in him. It's indescribable and one day he's going to be embarrassed about the mewling sounds that are being punched out of him, but today is not that day.

Stiles's hands are bruising on his hips and among wishes for Stiles to give it to him faster, there's the needy part of Derek that wants to be marked up for days, so he can remember this, because he knows that Stiles won't be here then. He knows that he'll be bruised from the impact of his knees against the piano and Stiles will wear his love-bites and bruises for a long time.

It would be embarrassing how swiftly Stiles is unravelling him, taking him apart, but he's long since accepted that that is the Stiles Stilinski affect and he *loves it all*.

Stiles gasps out something about coming and Derek abruptly decides that he wants to come on his cock. It takes Derek a beat to realise he said this out loud and Stiles is groaning like crazy. He feels a little gratified, really, that he's not the only one driven crazy.

It only takes another brush against his prostate for Derek to spend upon Stiles's chest, marking the skin and *destroying* him with the strength of it. He shudders through the aftershocks that are punctuated by Stiles's thrusts. He's stupidly happy that his death by orgasm milk Stiles's own out of him

and he comes with a choked off sound.

Derek's ears are filled with a buzzing sound and he's exhausted when Stiles tugs him down from the surface of the piano—which, reminder to self, disinfect *forever*—and below it instead. He's too fucked out to protest when Stiles grabs his quilt and clambers back underneath, condom deposited.

The grumble of complaint he lets loose makes Stiles snort with messy laughter, and in retaliation he hugs him close to his chest; it's odd how well they fit, he thinks, because they are two full grown men, both tall, while Stiles is lean and lithe and Derek is all muscle, but something in Derek settles when he's got Stiles in his arms.

Another day, Derek will be embarrassed that he just sacks out—there is no blacking out here, no sir—but sleep claims him before he can even kiss Stiles goodnight.

Candy Shop is quite possibly the worst alarm clock the world could ever invent.

Especially when he's tempted to never move again, because he's wrapped around Stiles, face slack and sweet with sleep, body pressed against his beautifully.

He blinks awake and abruptly realises it's Isaac's tone and dives for the phone from where it lays on top of his glass table. The piano gets in the way of that part, though, so he gets a healthy forehead-ful of piano, which makes him grunt.

He staggers out from under the piano, tugging on last night's jeans, and ducking out the balcony door. The city unfurls before him, the sky light grey, and objectively he can recognise its beauty but it's nothing in comparison to the man asleep under his piano currently. He can hear Cora calling him corn bread in his head, he needs help.

“Derek,” Isaac chirps. “How are—”

“I had sex with Stiles,” Derek rasps out immediately. He doesn’t know why he shares, but maybe it’s because it was life-affirming and this is also the closest thing he has to a brother. He stares at the love bite on his bicep while waiting for his inevitable freak-out and shivers, remembering the press of Stiles’s lips and teeth against his skin.

“YOU HAD SEX WITH STILES.”

“Isaac, you’re in Starbucks. You’ll scare the hipsters.”

Derek hears muttered apologies and smiles. His manager is such an ass sometimes.

“Was it good? Don’t answer that. Was it a good *idea*? Do we need to do pros and cons?” Isaac whispers.

Derek remembers Stiles’s touch, the way it felt like a brand, like he was marking Derek as *his* and the feel of their bodies pressed against each other, the slick sweet haven that was Stiles’s mouth, his firm grip, how he felt when he was inside Derek. *No*, Derek thinks, *it wasn’t a good idea, because I now need my lyricist.*

“It was good,” Derek swallows around the lump in his throat. “Definitely. Definitely good.”

“Ugh,” Isaac sounds supremely disgusted. “How did you manage to get laid before I did?”

“What about Danny?”

Isaac sighs like a teenager in love. “We walked through central park and I kissed him on his doorstep.”

This time, Derek makes the disgusted sound.

There’s a bang and a resounding yelp from inside the apartment, and Derek

sees the lump under the sheets wriggle.

“Stiles is up,” Derek says quickly.

“Go make him breakfast. Don’t forget we’ve got the show at Six Flags-”

Derek cuts Isaac off and slides the phone back in his pocket. He sucks in a breath, which is supposed to prepare his mental stability, and slips back into his apartment.

Crazy in Love

Chapter Summary

In which there is twenty questions, interrogations from protective ten year olds and over-sharing. Derek is right to be afraid.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

When he steps back through the door, he notes that Stiles is wrapped in only the quilt, cheeks flushed, looking like something Derek wants to possibly keep forever and he may or may not trip up over absolutely nothing.

It's possible he just tripped over his own brain. He lost that when Stiles walked into the apartment for the first time.

"I thought I'd tidy up," Stiles says, practically exuding awkward and it's a sign that Derek's too fucking gone because he finds it adorable. Though he refuses to even think the word so it does not count.

"I would but I've got a show," Derek replies, scratching a hand through his hair. Stiles's face falls, which, no; Derek realises how much of an idiot he is, but he wants to keep Stiles smiling like the best thing ever has just happened, like he was five seconds ago. It's a lot to hope for when he's as moody as they come and struck by shyness the rest of the time, but he's always aimed high.

"You should come."

“I just did,” Stiles leers and even as Derek rolls his eyes, because apparently he’s doing whatever he’s doing with an actual twelve year old, Stiles laughs and it’s like all the tension just drains out of his shoulders.

“To the show.” Damn, his voice sounds too fond. “I want you to come to my show.”

Stiles looks startled for a second before grinning widely enough to put dimples in his cheeks.

“Okie dokie,” Stiles chirps and Derek would be alright with making him happy for the rest of his life. He thinks he might be good at it.

The shower they share—Derek can’t even remember the last time he showered, he’s *gross*—is an accident waiting to happen. Stiles’s elbows are weapons, his knees aren’t much better and Derek hasn’t ever showered with another individual. It makes for a frankly interesting experience.

It looks bad when Stiles spills shampoo into Derek’s eyes and he wants to actively die because fuck, it’s seven kinds of excruciating, but the apology blow job he receives more than makes up for it.

Mostly. The fact they end up being late is definitely Stiles’s fault. Breakfast burritos are not a goddamn necessity. Though, he supposes, it’s as much his fault; he’s a grown man, a fucking adult, he should be able to resist Stiles’s begging eyes.

“This isn’t my fault,” Stiles objects. Derek raises his eyebrows.

“I never said it was,” he replies, glaring at the rows of cars ahead. He’s already listened to one frantic voicemail message from Isaac.

Isaac and panic do not go hand in hand. He has a tendency to hyperventilate and swear. Not exactly appropriate behaviour for Six Flags, especially when this is Derek’s biggest gig of the year; he wants to harm himself for even thinking the word gig, but when he’s getting paid a few thousand per

hour, he'll do pretty much anything. Aside from rapping. That is a thing that will never happen.

"You didn't have to say it; I know you were thinking it. It's all in the eyebrows."

"That's quite the gift."

Stiles glares at Derek and he fights back the urge to grin. There's something about Stiles that makes him act like a petulant little kid, it has to be said.

"I could give you road head," Stiles says thoughtfully.

It's unfortunate that Derek's just taken his foot off the brake when he says that and has to slam onto them to prevent an accident. Derek looks at Stiles with murder in his eyes. This is his sister's car. Laura—for all her lovely personal attributes—fucking cherishes this car. More than Derek and Cora. More than Ryan Reynolds. His life might flash past his eyes, but that is the burden of having a terrifying big sister.

"Or not," Stiles finishes, smiling sweetly. "Twenty questions?"

"No way in hell." Derek says resolutely. He doesn't just say it so he can see Stiles pout. Indignation looks good on him.

"Come on," Stiles pleads. Thirty minutes have passed and they have quite literally moved forward one metre. This is ridiculous. This is the traffic of lore. "*Please.*"

There will be a day when Derek Hale can say no to Stiles Stilinski without feeling like he's just trodden on his dog's paw—he did that once and bought said dog treats for the next month, even though it was Isaac's dog—but today is not that day.

"We're not in middle school," Derek says.

“I had no idea.”

“Fine,” he sighs, begrudgingly, irritated by the way Stiles’s face just lights up like Derek’s something golden and amazing. His face is quite literally an open book and it’s fascinating.

He may or may not resent Stiles for this fact. It makes him so easy to please and that’s addictive.

“You can go first,” Stiles says generously.

“Thanks.” His tone is Sahara dry. It’s a speciality of his. “Favourite band?”

“Does Glee count?”

“Get out of my car.”

Stiles cackles with laughter. “I’ll go with All Time Low.”

“That’s even worse.”

“Bite your tongue, Hale. You?” Stiles asks, his curiosity getting the better of him.

“Pop, of course,” Derek says, like it’s obvious and Stiles begins to question his taste in men.

“Favourite movie?”

“Fight Club,” Derek replies absently, pleased at the sudden movement in traffic. Disappointment floods through him again when they stop only three feet ahead.

“Ditto,” Stiles grins, all white, blinding teeth, and Derek might start sweating.

“Full name?” Stiles visibly winces.

“Stiles Scott Stilinski.”

“You never had a chance, did you?” Derek asks, almost pityingly. He laughs when Stiles swats his arm.

“Dick. Guess you’ll never know my real first name.” He sniffs and straightens his—Derek’s—shirt. Derek might get distracted by the way the fabric hugs his broad shoulders and the fact that his shirt is against Stiles’s naked skin. He almost swallows his tongue, in fact.

“What is it?”

“No. You’ve lost that right. Not like you could pronounce it anyway.” Stiles says, and waves imperiously at Derek to answer his own question. It looks like he doesn’t quite understand the rules but it’s not like Derek will correct him. He realises it’s sad that this is quite possibly the most fun he’s had in what feels like forever, thanks.

“Derek James Hale.”

“Shut up,” Stiles looks grumpy and he mutters about *damn American names* before sitting up abruptly. “Marvel or DC?”

Derek gulps, because this is a game-changer. “Marvel.”

Stiles grins. “DC. Clearly we’re a train-wreck waiting to happen.”

The journey becomes almost unbearably enjoyable, until Stiles switches on the radio and *Dear Maria, Count Me In* blares out. His whoop nearly drowns out the music and Derek definitely wants to get out of the car when he starts singing along at top volume.

If he thought Stiles was bad with the All Time Low, he decides to belt out the lyrics along with Derek to *every single song*. He doesn’t even know how he knows the words, but he does. It means Derek is slightly more distracted than usual and may or may not drop his microphone several times.

He stands behind the crowd of fans—wearing neon shirts and paint, his eyes burn—and waves his cell phone in the air like a lighter. He looks demented and keeps dropping it and Derek has never wanted to kiss him more than when he mouths along with the words.

When the show finishes—at last—he's hot and bothered and stupidly pleased when Stiles rushes back stage and grins at him.

Until Stiles declares that—since they're all the way here—they need to go on a few rides. Starting with the Water rides. Apparently they are Stiles's Kryptonite.

He grins and bears it, though, because Stiles keeps dancing in line in excitement, more excited than the five year old in front of them, and he's so cute Derek's chest *aches*.

The ride itself isn't great—he remembers getting lost at Six Flags and crying on a bench until Laura found him when he was seven—but he gets to have a cliché movie moment, which is something, when the ride declares that there's a camera just after a wall of water washes over them. Stiles is still *whooping* jerkily and laughing slightly hysterically.

Derek doesn't think and kisses Stiles like he's wanted to all afternoon. He blames it on the cold water turning his shirt see-through and his cheeks a ruddy red. Judging by the way Stiles responds enthusiastically and smiles against his mouth, he didn't make a mistake.

That is until they have to exit the car and cover their erections. Stiles keeps snickering which does not help things whatsoever. Neither does his insistence that they buy the photograph.

Derek buys three copies, including a keychain, because he's deeply pathetic and susceptible to Stiles's puppy eyes. It's a thing.

It's slightly worse when the vendor recognises Derek as the guy from Pop doing a song with Stiles for Erica. That's when things go downhill. The vendor—her name's Betty—keeps crying and frames the photograph.

That's not before they get Derek and Stiles to sign it.

As it turns out, Erica's quite the tweeter—if that's even a word—and has been tweeting Stiles non-stop. Her three hundred million followers appear to appreciate her banter with Stiles over Batman vs. Spiderman, not to mention her goddamn enthusiasm over what a cute couple Stiles and Derek make. Somehow, she's managed to instagram—he feels old when he has to ask Stiles what it means but it's okay because Stiles tells him he's cute—a photo of the two of them just smiling at each other, looking fucking gone on each other just before Erica told them that she loved their song.

The second thing he does is buy Stiles a Six Flags baseball cap. He was famous for approximately five minutes—he's gifted, it's a thing—but he remembers how annoying the paparazzi were, and he doesn't want that for Stiles.

He doesn't expect to be so weak willed that he takes a photo with Stiles, looking damnably cute in his green hat, and sets it immediately as his background wallpaper. Cora showed him how to the last time she was in town.

That's the point at which he realises there's no fucking way his sisters won't find out. He turns off his phone instantly and prays that Laura won't badger Isaac for information. It wouldn't be the first time.

The journey back into the city is awkward. Isaac keeps smirking at Stiles and has, on multiple occasions, tried to start a sentence with, “So, last night I heard...” but Derek's got a stare of death that he happens to know Isaac is afraid of. Probably because it reminds him of Laura and he's terrified of Laura. As anyone intelligent should be.

“Crap, I've got dinner,” Stiles says abruptly. He pops his head past the two seats and Derek's eyes are automatically drawn to his profile, the curve of his upturned nose, his fucking *cheekbones* and the curve of his hair. He gulps for air.

“Huh?”

Stiles shoots him a smirk. “With Scott, Allison and co.”

He abruptly looks thoughtful. “He wouldn’t maim me if I brought you along.”

Derek flushes. He ignores the way Stiles *coos* at the tips of his ears. It’s not his fault they go red.

“You want me there?” He asks cautiously. Stiles looks like he wants to roll his eyes but smiles instead.

“No, that’s why I didn’t ask you and threw myself out of the car.”

“That sounds dangerous.”

“I’ve just texted Scott you’re coming, so you are. No backoutsies.”

“That’s not even a word,” Derek scoffs.

“It is now, Hale. You’re going to love it.”

Derek has to force back a grin.

“Scott just sent me like six hundred smiley emoticons,” Stiles informs him. “You might need some sort of body armour.”

“I’ve got you, haven’t I?”

He’s gratified by the way Stiles’s cheeks flush and he slaps Derek’s shoulder affectionately.

There’s calm silence in the car even as Stiles’s eyes just gaze into Derek’s and he feels like his emotions are spread everywhere for him to see. It’s a little overwhelming, to be honest.

“Don’t worry, I’ve got dinner plans,” Isaac tells them when the staring—eye-fucking, it’s definitely not appropriate for those aged under eighteen—

becomes too much even for him, closeted romantic that he is.

Scott looks like he's barely controlling his excitement when he opens the door.

Stiles recognises that he's doing breathing from Allison's Lamar's class, like he's a heavily pregnant woman. This is officially hilarious.

It becomes even funnier when Chris and Tori, instead of grinning and jumping like excited puppies, which they usually do at Stiles's presence, just FYI, assume Godfather like positions.

Derek wonders if they're going to start talking about respect and wedding days. He also fears for his life, just a little bit.

He's acutely aware of Allison, whose face drained of all colour when he walked in.

This looks to be a stunning evening altogether.

"He needs to help me with the potatoes," Allison says abruptly, face still grey-white.

"Don't touch the potatoes," Stiles mutters under his breath and Derek wants to know what's wrong with the goddamn potatoes, are they infectious—but he's dragged away by Allison's steel grip on his wrist. He may fear for his life, especially when she shoves him into a sitting position on a bar stool.

The fact that their meal is laid out, ready for consuming, makes Derek abruptly afraid. And it's not just because the potatoes are orange, holy shit.

"You knew Kate," Allison begins, wincing when Derek visibly flinches. "And my dad."

He sits very, very still, trying not to breathe too loudly. And that's not just because he doesn't want to breathe near the potatoes.

“I just wanted you to know that I don’t agree with what they did, and I’m not like them,” Allison says firmly, not that he hadn’t realised that she was her own person. “My family’s sitting out there, not behind bars, where they belong.”

Derek nods, unable to stop the rush of images as they wash over him; Kate laughing even as they dragged her away in handcuffs, Chris much more stoic as his wife and daughter watched on.

He remembers Laura’s hand on his shoulder and Cora’s arm around his waist, holding him up, as he tried to forget the burning remains of his apartment and how close he’d come to a disaster. His *sisters* could have been in there; he’d lost his parents at age fifteen in a car accident, and he couldn’t lose them too.

He’s still plagued by nightmares about it, especially when he remembers his dad sitting him down at age eleven and telling him to take care of his sisters. Not that they’ve ever needed it, really, any guy who isn’t scared of either Cora or Laura is a fucking idiot.

He abruptly realises that Allison is nothing whatsoever like her aunt, or her dad; there’s a genuineness about her personality that makes him see that she’s a decent, honestly good person. There’s no point holding her to blame for what her family might have done.

He understands that she doesn’t let her family define her, but she defines herself, and he admires that.

So he nods firmly and watches a pleased smile break out on Allison’s sweet face.

“I’m pretty sure Scott will have finished interrogating Stiles by now,” she says and Derek can’t help the groan that he lets out. He never felt tempted to share dinner with one of the psychopathic fans before. Stiles is lucky he gives really good head.

Allison just laughs and shoves the brownie pan in his hands, smirking when

he looks hopefully at them.

“What’s disturbing is that you look at Stiles the same way.”

“Leave me alone,” Derek grumbles, ignoring her laughter all the way to his seat.

If Laura, Erica and Allison ever met, he’s pretty sure the universe would implode out of sheer self-preservation.

Stiles isn’t entirely unsurprised when Scott drags him out of dinner by the back of his shirt. What’s surprising is that he looks more serious than he has since the Tori’s birth, when Allison told him they were never having sex *again*.

Stiles had been subjected to several panicked phone calls—reasonably, Stiles has heard more about their sex life than he’s ever gonna be comfortable with but he knows that they have good sex—before he made Scott watch a home birthing video from a girl at his old work and they both gained a newfound respect for Allison’s vagina. Scott hasn’t spoken to him about sex since. For all he knows they don’t have sex. And that’s all he wants to know.

“I can see how you’re looking at him, Stiles,” Scott says. “*You* don’t fall in love easily.”

His lips are pursed and there’s honest-to-God anxiety in his eyes. Stiles feels a rush of love.

“I’m not in love,” Stiles assures him. Scott looks dubious. “The one time we slept together it was totally professional—”

“SHUT UP.”

“No, you.” Stiles replies, enjoying this immensely.

“YOU DID NOT.”

“I did,” Stiles bites his lips remembering it and Scott squawks with something that’s a mix of indignation and scandal and excitement.

“I NEED TO TELL ALLISON. I CALLED IT.”

“You can lower your voice now.”

“I DON’T THINK I CAN. GO. JUST GO.”

Stiles smirks and ruffles his brother’s hair while he scrambles for his phone. He knows Scott won’t tell anyone that isn’t Allison. Sure enough, he hears Allison’s ‘Hollaback Girl’ ringtone and her squeak of surprise.

Stiles winks at her as he settles back at the table and she smothers a laugh.

Chris continues interrogating Derek on his preferred form of Valentine’s Day celebrations. The funny part is that he’s thirteen and deadly serious and his baby sister—Tori ‘Smiles and Unicorns’ McCall-Argent has *crossed her arms* and keeps glaring—he wasn’t even sure her face could do *that*.

Apparently their Uncle Stiles means a lot to them and that may or may not send a flare of warmth through his chest, especially when Derek just answers every question gravely and tries to answer what his intentions are with Stiles.

Stiles might just kick back and watch. This is the funniest shit he’s seen all day, and he’s seen Derek eat four hotdogs in the space of fifteen minutes.

Derek feels decidedly worse for wear when they get down to the lobby of their apartment building. He’s faced an interrogation and what must be evil potatoes, judging on what they’re doing to his stomach, and right now he’s faced with Stiles biting his lips and it’s all just too much for Derek to handle at eleven o’clock when he’s still exhausted.

“Don’t forget the meeting with Erica,” Derek says. He pauses and tries to say, without sounding desperate, “I could give you a lift? I live just a little

more uptown than you do, so—”

“I’ll be on the streets by eight,” Stiles assures him and looks at Derek fucking *hopefully*, from under his eyelashes, and Derek is so fucked.

“Don’t be late.”

“I’m never late,” Stiles huffs and rolls his eyes, but Derek knows for a fact that’s not true; the traffic jam of this morning proved that Stiles knows nothing about being on time.

“Uh huh.”

Stiles just grins.

Derek stops the cab a few blocks early and walks into the nearest Barns & Nobles to find a copy of Lydia Martin’s book. He doesn’t know why, but he wants Stiles to know just how wrong Lydia got him, because Derek might not have known him for long, but he knows he’s nothing like the pushy, selfish kid Lydia made him out to be. He’s just not.

He eats an entire bag of cookies when he gets home and tries to push through the book, but seriously, Lydia’s smart but she doesn’t need to keep adding words from the archaic strand of the English language. He feels like he should have a dictionary by his side to fully appreciate the book.

He gets a phone call from Laura about half-way through the book. He sets it down and prepares himself for shrieking.

“DEREK MARY JAMES HALE.”

Okay, so maybe he didn’t tell Stiles about the Mary part. No matter how unpronounceable his first name is, at least it fits his gender. His mother had ideas that names aren’t gender specific, which largely attributes for Laura’s Marcus and Cora’s Jonathan and also made Derek’s life hell on the school yard.

“You found out about Erica, huh?”

“DID I JUST.”

“Excited?”

The string of words she produces is incomprehensible, but he gets the gist; she’s more excited than he and Stiles combined. Oh God, she is never to meet Scott. That amount of excitement in a room would make something combust. It would probably be Derek’s brain.

“She’s dying,” he hears Cora say, and he realises he’s on speaker-phone.

“What did we say about privacy?”

“Screw privacy, who’s that guy we saw you with at Six Flags?”

Damn Isaac and his fear for Laura. He’s like putty in that girl’s hands, especially when it comes to snitching on Derek. And *oh God*, his sisters know he was having sex about twenty four hours ago, he’s supposed to be a role model, *no*.

Derek’s throat abruptly decides to close.

“I knew it. Called it, Cora, pay up.” Laura sounds impossibly smug and he hears Cora grumble in complaint. “He’s hot, by the way, nice catch Der.”

“I’m not talking to you about Stiles.”

“Oh, *Stiles* is his name, huh?” She coos his name and he can hear Cora cracking up in the background. How is this is life.

“Stiles, you’re so beautiful, your moles look like constellations,” Cora says, in a worryingly good attempt at Derek’s voice. He curses.

“You’re supposed to be the sane one,” he protests.

“Hey, be glad it’s Laura and not L.A. that’s corrupted me,” Cora says.

“How’s New York? Cold, huh?”

She sounds wistful and he can hear Laura cuff her on the back of the head.

“We love L.A., shut up,” Laura scolds.

“Whatever you say,” Cora sniffs. “Kiss a bagel for me, would you Der-bear?”

“The only one he’s kissing anytime soon is *Stiles*.”

His thirty year old sister proceeds to make kissy sounds. What. The. Fuck.

“No, but in all honesty Der-bear, I’m Facebooking him and there’s nothing you can do to stop me.” Cora says seriously. There’s silence on the end of the phone and Derek starts to get scared.

“Ooh, nice idea Cor, let’s add him at the same time,” Laura agrees and Derek might start protesting at the top of his lungs. Not that it means anything to his sisters. They’ve been ignoring him for years.

“Nice, he’s got *Winter is coming* as his life quote, we’ll get on well,” Cora mutters and Derek groans into the book.

“Who did I kill in a past life?”

“Derek, he’s adorable, I want to keep him,” Laura breathes and Derek knows she’s stalking through his photographs.

“What did I ever do to you?”

“Calm down Mary,” Laura admonishes. “We’re just appreciating his summer photos.”

“Laura.”

“You’re using the Tone on me? I invented the Tone.” Laura scoffs.

“Aww, he accepted,” Cora coos. “He accepted me first, clearly I’m his

favourite Hale.”

He can hear Laura huff in irritation. “No fair. Derek, Cora’s being mean.”

“Never contact me again.” He’s only half-joking.

“He just complained that you don’t have Facebook, Der,” Laura says. “He *likes* you, oh my god. This is precious.”

“It’s like a lifetime movie,” Cora says, laughter in her voice. He whines.

Why do they do this. Why.

“Hey, his friend Scott just added me,” Laura says matter-of-factly. There’s silence for a few minutes while Derek tries to breathe. “DEREK MARY JAMES HALE HAVE YOU HAD *SEX* WITH THIS KID?”

That’s the point at which he hangs up.

He wakes up like a bear with a sore head, barely half-way through the book with twenty two missed calls, all from his sisters and Isaac. Stupidly, he wants to see Stiles’s face.

That might be why he rushes through his normal morning workout and breakfast and speeds down town. He feels like a goddamn teenager.

True to his word, Stiles is wearing a bright orange Mets shirt. Derek might recoil from it.

“Marvel and a Yankees fan? Jeez, you’re lucky you’re funny,” Stiles says, kicking his feet back on Derek’s dashboard. He’s fairly sure somewhere in L.A. Laura just started hyperventilating.

“How do you know I like the Yankees?” Derek asks, slapping down his feet, ignoring his scowl.

“You can just smell it,” Stiles grimaces. “Plus, the sticker on your computer is kind of a hint. Don’t worry, I still like you. I think.”

“I feel privileged,” Derek informs him.

Erica’s studio is on the outskirts of Manhattan, all fibreglass and dark wood and shiny platinum records adorning every wall.

She’s apparently obsessed with wheatgrass, judging by the fact that they are offered—on multiple occasions with worrying amounts of enthusiasm—glassfuls of the stuff. Derek shudders and Stiles looks like someone just kicked him in the nuts. It smells like grass.

Erica is sitting on Boyd’s DJ Station and Derek wonders, when that kind of equipment costs millions—which it does—just how in love Boyd has to be to let her sit on it. He ignores the logic that says therefore that he loves Stiles because he let him have sex on his precious piano.

She beams with delight when she sees them.

“How are you?”

“Good, thanks, you?”

“I’m excited,” she grins toothily as if to emphasise that fact. “I managed to adapt the start to *A Way Back Into Love*, and I really think you’re going to love it!”

Her voice has descended into a squeal. Derek is afraid.

It’s even worse than he imagined.

Derek gets that she loves *Game of Thrones*—he cried as much as the next person at the Red Wedding, he’s still in mourning over it and everything—but is it really necessary to put the theme song at the start of their song?

Their individual, emotional song, and yes, he can hear Laura calling him a hipster in his head, but fuck it, this song means something and this is just making it a giant joke.

He can see Stiles's face is incredulous and just knows he's about to start yelling at Erica. He won't be alone, either. Derek wants to tell him to get in line and Isaac looks only seconds from passing out.

Stiles, instead, storms out, shouting about *wheat grass calling for him* over his shoulder. Erica grins at his retreating back and proceeds to question Derek on Stiles's favourite brand of liquor.

Apparently they're invited to her birthday party tomorrow night.

Derek isn't sure if they will make it through alive.

Interlude: Derek Hale's No Good Very Bad Day

Chapter Summary

Stiles gets his feelings hurt and Derek just wants all the Klondike Bars in the world to make things better.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

The party is a new kind of awful.

There are too many people for Derek to really be comfortable, and it's ultimately ruined by the fact that Isaac isn't there and Stiles is still annoyed at him for not standing up to Erica.

"Stiles! Derek!" Erica coos, heading straight for them as she strides into the room. Derek's impressed by how well she handles being in the spot light, all eyes on her, and yet she's in her element. Boyd, too, looks like he's where he belongs, by Erica's side, and Derek wonders if his eyes soften like that when he looks at Stiles. Not that Stiles has even looked at him once, not really.

"How are my favourite lyricists?" She looks expectantly from Stiles to Derek, seemingly perplexed by the lack of closeness between them.

Derek hadn't realised how close they stood and sat until he realised that he wasn't freezing because he needed more layers; he just needed Stiles. Which is unfortunate because Derek doesn't like needing people that aren't family. He ignores the little voice in the back of his head that says *you've*

never needed someone like you need Stiles because it's crazy.

"Fine," Stiles replies stonily. "Erica, I wanted to ask you—"

A crowd of people jostling past them to get to Erica thankfully silences him and Derek thanks whatever deities are available for it.

"Ooh, before I forget, we need another verse on the end of your baby," Erica tells them, beaming like this is a good thing. Derek's faintly afraid she's gone crazy. "To get it on the album, we'll need it by tomorrow morning at ten. That's fine right, for experts like you two!"

Stiles sputters and Derek feels a little like he's going to puke.

The sensation is worsened by the fact that Reptile-Lyricist-Most-Likely-Psycho Matt asks Stiles if he wants to dance when there is no music. Stiles replies, in that charming way he has—it makes Derek want to quite literally tear off all his clothes, his smile is *damaging* to his *mind*—that he can't dance and Matt spits back *WHAT LITTLE BASTARD DOESN'T KNOW HOW TO DANCE*.

Safe to say, they move away quite quickly after that.

It's just after this that Stiles decides to take the ill-advised plunge and declares that he hates the beginning to the song and Erica's face falls.

"I really love it," Erica sounds hurt and Derek wonders if he's going to be maimed before they leave the premises.

"It's just not...right for the feel of the song," Stiles struggles, glaring at Derek as if to say, *back me up*. Derek does no such thing, mostly because he's more terrified about losing the one thing that will make his sisters proud than he is of the steely glint in Stiles's eyes.

"I'll think about it. But thank you, Stiles," Erica says, voice uncertain and Derek takes that as a sign to run for it.

He's worried when Stiles doesn't speak to him on the journey back to the

flat, and not even when he's sat down with his usual pad, face visibly grimacing in annoyance.

It makes Derek awkward and he fusses around the piano, adjusting every book that looks a little untidy. Somewhere in L.A. Laura is purring in contentment.

"I can't believe you didn't back me up," Stiles says quietly, after a few minutes worth of stewing. Derek almost feels relieved because this is better than nothing.

"It wouldn't matter even if I did," Derek snaps back, irritation suddenly itching under his skin. "She doesn't *care* about what *we* want, she's the one who's going to fall in popularity after the world discovers she's done a song with *me*."

"Don't be so fucking stupid. This song is great, alright, and you'd know that if you trusted me," Stiles sounds distinctly hurt, and Derek flinches.

"This isn't about you, Stiles," Derek hisses and his temper flares the second Stiles laughs in his face.

"This has never been about me! I didn't want to do this in the first place!" Stiles yells back. "But that never mattered, did it?"

"We can't lose this job." Derek's world feels like it's being pushed off its axis, and he's spinning along with it.

"Are you even listening to me?" Stiles's voice is incredulous and he wonders how Stiles has any right to be angry, when this won't ruin his life, whatsoever, it won't even *touch* it.

"Lydia got you right, didn't she?" Derek's aware that he's sneering at Stiles, but he's too angry to stop now. Even though Stiles's eyes have gone fucking Disney-like in their shock.

"You're just that pushy kid that won't let a good thing happen because it's not the thing you want." Derek's voice is unfamiliar—he's not Laura, he

doesn't get angry, he walks away-- but right now he's feeling murderous.

"This means something, Stiles, do you have any idea what this will do for my family? My sisters won't have to live in L.A. and I can be someone they're fucking *proud* to be related to."

"It's not your song anymore; it's Erica's. She doesn't have to do what you want her to," Derek tells him. "She can do what she wants; she's won enough Grammys to have the right to be her own person instead of the one you want her to be. I know you have issues with that, but this isn't *about you*."

Then, like vomit, the words seem to spew out, "stop being a goddamned child."

Stiles has gone stark white like Derek's slapped him, and worst of all, loud-mouthed, irritatingly passionate and *fiery* Stiles Stilinski visibly sets his mouth into a firm line and just walks away like Derek wishes he had earlier, slamming the door hard enough behind him that the photo-frames rattle on the walls.

Derek slumps into a chair and spends the rest of the night discovering how many Klondike bars his body can consume before he wants to puke and attempting to write the rest of the song.

(The answer is twenty three, by the way and he gives up after rhyming Pope and hope).

He wakes up alone with a Klondike wrapper stuck to his face and no idea what time it is.

Driving to the studio in yesterday's sweats—they're his eating trousers, he's still feeling the affect of those bars—isn't the most professional thing he's ever done, but it's not like it matters. He blasts Brand New in the car and it helps to ease the sting of last night just a little.

Erica's reception is frosty, a cool welcome with none of the previous enthusiasm, not even when her fucking beginning plays. Boyd asks after Stiles and he abruptly wants to cry and call Laura.

Singing the song for the album is like being punched repeatedly.

It's unfortunate that all he can hear is Stiles drawling, *Are all Hales drama queens*, in his head but there you have it. It's not the worst thing he's heard Stiles's voice say; he's had his shouts echoing throughout his head for the larger part of the morning, anyway.

He holds his breath, which makes singing *fun*, for the record, when they approach the spot where the new verse should be.

It's acutely painful to listen to, because this is pure, concentrated Stiles, and if *he* feels like this, then it's clear Derek hasn't told him enough—or anything, really, *fuck*—about what he's feeling.

There are moments when I don't know if it's real

Or if anybody feels the way I feel

I need inspiration

Not just another negotiation.

Derek feels as though he's quite literally been gutted.

His entrails could be spilling across the floor, and it would feel precisely the same, he thinks.

End Notes

Thank you for reading <3 if you want to flail with me over Teen Wolf, Supernatural, Doctor Who and Sherlock, you can find me at stilinskihaleandpack.tumblr.com

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